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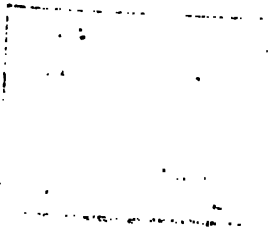

The Bridge of Saragossa.

Etching by Charles A. Platt.

Holly Edition

Spanish Papers

By Washington Irving

Illustrated

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Spanish Papers

Preface by the Editor.

A LIMITED edition of the *Legends of the Conquest of Spain*, with which this volume commences, was published in 1835. These legends, consisting of the *"Legend of Don Roderick," the "Legend of the Subjugation of Spain," the "Legend of Count Julian and his Family," formed No. III. of the *Crayon Miscellany*. For the chronicles which follow them, with the exception of *"Abderahman" and †"Spanish Romance," which have appeared in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, I have drawn upon the unpublished manuscripts of Mr. Irving bequeathed to me by his will. This portion of the volume is illustrative of the wars between the Spaniards and the Moors, and consists of the *"Legend of Pelayo," the "Chronicle of

*In the present edition these appear in the volume entitled *Mahomet*, Vol. III.

†In the present edition this appears in *Crayon Miscellanies*, Vol. II.

Count Fernan Gonzalez," the most illustrious hero of his epoch, who united the kingdoms of Leon and Castile; and the "Chronicle of Fernando the Saint," that renowned champion of the faith, under whom the greater part of Spain was rescued from the Moors. I have selected these themes from a mass of unpublished manuscript that came into my hands at the death of Mr. Irving, because they bore the impress of being most nearly, though not fully, prepared for the press, and because they had for him a special fascination, arising in part, perhaps, from his long residence in that romantic country. "These old Morisco-Spanish subjects"—is the language of one of his published letters—"have a charm that makes me content to write about them at half price. They have so much that is high-minded, and chivalrous, and quaint, and picturesque, and at times half comic, about them."

Preface.

FEW events in history have been so original and striking in their main circumstances, and so overwhelming and enduring in their consequences, as that of the conquest of Spain by the Saracens; yet there are few where the motives, and characters, and actions of the agents have been enveloped in more doubts and contradiction. As in the memorable story of the "Fall of Troy," we have to make out, as well as we can, the veritable details through the mists of poetic fiction; yet poetry has so combined itself with and lent its magic coloring to every fact, that to strip it away would be to reduce the story to a meagre skeleton and rob it of all its charms. The storm of Moslem invasion that swept so suddenly over the peninsula silenced for a time the faint voice of the Muse, and drove the sons of learning from their cells. The pen was thrown aside to grasp the sword and spear,

and men were too much taken up with battling against the evils which beset them on every side, to find time or inclination to record them.

When the nation had recovered in some degree from the effects of this astounding blow, or rather had become accustomed to the tremendous reverse which it produced, and sage men sought to inquire and write the particulars, it was too late to ascertain them in their exact verity. The gloom and melancholy that had overshadowed the land had given birth to a thousand superstitious fancies; the woes and terrors of the past were clothed with supernatural miracles and portents, and the actors in the fearful drama had already assumed the dubious characteristics of romance. Or if a writer from among the conquerors undertook to touch upon the theme, it was embellished with all the wild extravagances of an Oriental imagination, which afterwards stole into the graver works of the monkish historians.

Hence, the earliest chronicles which treat of the downfall of Spain are apt to be tinctured with those saintly miracles which savor of the pious labors of the cloister, or those fanciful fictions that betray their Arabian authors. Yet from these apocryphal sources the most legitimate and accredited Spanish histories

have taken their rise, as pure rivers may be traced up to the fens and mantled pools of a morass. It is true, the authors, with cautious discrimination, have discarded those particulars too startling for belief, and have culled only such as, from their probability and congruity, might be safely recorded as historical facts; yet, scarce one of these but has been connected in the original with some romantic fiction, and even in its divorced state bears traces of its former alliance.

To discard, however, everything wild and marvellous in this portion of Spanish history, is to discard some of its most beautiful, instructive, and national features; it is to judge of Spain by the standard of probability suited to tamer and more prosaic countries. Spain is virtually a land of poetry and romance, where every-day life partakes of adventure, and where the least agitation or excitement carries everything up to extravagant enterprise and daring exploit. The Spaniards, in all ages, have been of swelling and braggart spirit, soaring in thought, pompous in word, and valiant, though vainglorious, in deed. Their heroic aims have transcended the cooler conceptions of their neighbors, and their reckless daring has borne them on to achievements which prudent enterprise could never have

accomplished. Since the time, too, of the conquest and occupation of their country by the Arabs, a strong infusion of Oriental magnificence has entered into the national character, and rendered the Spaniard distinct from every other nation of Europe.

In the following pages, therefore, the author has ventured to dip more deeply into the enchanted fountains of old Spanish chronicle than has usually been done by those who, in modern times, have treated of the eventful period of the Conquest; but in so doing, he trusts he will illustrate more fully the character of the people and the times. He has thought proper to throw these records into the form of legends, not claiming for them the authenticity of sober history, yet giving nothing that has not historical foundation. All the facts herein contained, however extravagant some of them may be deemed, will be found in the works of sage and reverend chroniclers of yore, growing side by side with long-acknowledged truths, and might be supported by learned and imposing references in the margin.

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LEGEND

OF

THE SUBJUGATION OF SPAIN.

LEGEND

OF

THE SUBJUGATION OF SPAIN.*

Chapter 1.

Consternation of Spain—Conduct of the Conquerors —Missives between Taric and Muza.

THE overthrow of King Roderick and his army on the banks of the Guadalete, threw open all southern Spain to the inroads of the Moslems. The whole country fled before them; villages and hamlets were hastily abandoned; the inhabitants placed their aged and infirm, their wives and children,

* In this legend most of the facts respecting the Arab inroads into Spain are on the authority of Arabian writers, who had the most accurate means of information. Those relative to the Spaniards are chiefly from old Spanish chronicles. It is to be remarked

and their most precious effects, on mules and other beasts of burden, and driving before them their flocks and herds, made for distant parts of the land, for the fastnesses of the mountains, and for such of the cities as yet possessed walls and bulwarks. Many gave out, faint and weary, by the way, and fell into the hands of the enemy; others, at the distant sight of a turban or a Moslem standard, or on hearing the clangor of a trumpet, abandoned their flocks and herds and hastened their flight with their families. If their pursuers gained upon them, they threw by their household goods and whatever was of burden, and thought themselves fortunate to escape, naked and destitute, to a place of refuge. Thus the roads were covered with scattered flocks and herds, and with spoil of all kinds.

The Arabs, however, were not guilty of wanton cruelty or ravage; on the contrary, they conducted themselves with a moderation but seldom witnessed in more civilized conquerors. Taric el Tuerto, though a thorough man of the sword, and one whose whole

that the Arab accounts have most the air of verity, and the events as they relate them are in the ordinary course of common life. The Spanish accounts, on the contrary, are full of the marvellous; for there were no greater romancers than the monkish chroniclers.

thoughts were warlike, yet evinced wonderful judgment and discretion. He checked the predatory habits of his troops with a rigorous hand. They were forbidden, under pain of severe punishment, to molest any peaceable and unfortified towns, or any unarmed and unresisting people, who remained quiet in their homes. No spoil was permitted to be made, excepting in fields of battle, in camps of routed foes, or in cities taken by the sword.

Taric had little need to exercise his severity; his orders were obeyed through love, rather than fear, for he was the idol of his soldiery. They admired his restless and daring spirit, which nothing could dismay. His gaunt and sinewy form, his fiery eye, his visage seamed with scars, were suited to the hardihood of his deeds; and when mounted on his foaming steed, careering the field of battle with quivering lance or flashing scimitar, his Arabs would greet him with shouts of enthusiasm. But what endeared him to them more than all was his soldier-like contempt of gain. Conquest was his only passion: glory the only reward he coveted. As to the spoil of the conquered, he shared it freely among his followers, and squandered his own portion with open-handed generosity.

While Taric was pushing his triumphant

course through Andalusia, tidings of his stupendous victory on the banks of the Guadalete were carried to Muza ben Nosier. Messenger after messenger arrived, vying who should most extol the achievements of the conqueror and the grandeur of the conquest. "Taric," said they, "has overthrown the whole force of the unbelievers in one mighty battle. Their king is slain; thousands and tens of thousands of their warriors are destroyed; the whole land lies at our mercy; and city after city is surrendering to the victorious arms of Taric."

The heart of Muza ben Nosier sickened at these tidings, and, instead of rejoicing at the success of the cause of Islam, he trembled with jealous fear lest the triumphs of Taric in Spain should eclipse his own victories in Africa. He despatched missives to the Caliph Waled Almanzor, informing him of these new conquests, but taking the whole glory to himself, and making no mention of the services of Taric; or at least, only mentioning him incidentally as a subordinate commander. "The battles," said he, "have been terrible as the day of judgment; but by the aid of Allah we have gained the victory."

He then prepared in all haste to cross over into Spain and assume the command of the conquering army; and he wrote a letter in advance to interrupt Taric in the midst of his

career. "Wherever this letter may find thee," said he, "I charge thee halt with thy army and await my coming. Thy force is inadequate to the subjugation of the land, and by rashly venturing, thou mayst lose everything. I will be with thee speedily, with a reinforcement of troops competent to so great an enterprise."

The letter overtook the veteran Taric while in the full glow of triumphant success, having overrun some of the richest part of Andalusia, and just received the surrender of the city of Ecija. As he read the letter the blood mantled in his sunburnt cheek and fire kindled in his eye, for he penetrated the motives of Muza. He suppressed his wrath, however, and turning with a bitter expression of forced composure to his captains, "Unsaddle your steeds," said he, "and plant your lances in the earth; set up your tents and take your repose, for we must await the coming of the Wali with a mighty force to assist us in our conquest."

The Arab warriors broke forth with loud murmurs at these words. "What need have we of aid," cried they, "when the whole country is flying before us; and what better commander can we have than Taric to lead us on to victory?"

Count Julian, also, who was present, now hastened to give his traitorous counsel.

"Why pause," cried he, "at this precious moment? The great army of the Goths is vanquished, and their nobles are slaughtered or dispersed. Follow up your blow before the land can recover from its panic. Overrun the provinces, seize upon the cities, make yourself master of the capital, and your conquest is complete."*

The advice of Julian was applauded by all the Arab chieftains, who were impatient of any interruption in their career of conquest. Taric was easily persuaded to what was the wish of his heart. Disregarding the letter of Muza, therefore, he prepared to pursue his victories. For this purpose he ordered a review of his troops on the plain of Ecija. Some were mounted on steeds which they had brought from Africa; the rest he supplied with horses taken from the Christians. He repeated his general orders, that they should inflict no wanton injury, nor plunder any place that offered no resistance. They were forbidden, also, to encumber themselves with booty, or even with provisions; but were to scour the country with all speed, and seize upon all its fortresses and strongholds.

He then divided his host into three several armies. One he placed under the command of

* Conde, p. 1, c. 10.

the Greek renegado Magued el Rumi, a man of desperate courage; and sent it against the ancient city of Cordova. Another was sent against the city of Malaga, and was led by Zayd ben Kesadi, aided by the Bishop Oppas. The third was led by Taric himself, and with this he determined to make a wide sweep through the kingdom.*

* *Cronica de España*, de Alonzo el Sabio, p. 3, c. 1.

Chapter 11.

Capture of Granada—Subjugation of the Alpuxarra Mountains.

THE terror of the arms of Taric ben Zeyad went before him; and, at the same time, the report of his lenity to those who submitted without resistance. Wherever he appeared, the towns, for the most part, sent forth some of their principal inhabitants to proffer a surrender; for they were destitute of fortifications, and their fighting men had perished in battle. They were all received into allegiance to the Caliph, and were protected from pillage or molestation.

After marching some distance through the country, he entered one day a vast and beautiful plain, interspersed with villages, adorned with groves and gardens, watered by winding rivers, and surrounded by lofty mountains. It was the famous vega, or plain of Granada, destined to be for ages the favorite abode of the

Moslems. When the Arab conquerors beheld this delicious vega, they were lost in admiration; for it seemed as if the Prophet had given them a paradise on earth, as a reward for their services in his cause.

Taric approached the city of Granada, which had a formidable aspect, seated on lofty hills and fortified with Gothic walls and towers, and with the red castle or citadel, built in times of old by the Phœnicians or the Romans. As the Arab chieftain eyed the place, he was pleased with its stern warrior look, contrasting with the smiling beauty of its vega, and the freshness and voluptuous abundance of its hills and valleys. He pitched his tents before its walls, and made preparations to attack it with all his force.

The city, however, bore but the semblance of power. The flower of its youth had perished in the battle of the Guadalete; many of the principal inhabitants had fled to the mountains, and few remained in the city excepting old men, women, and children, and a number of Jews, which last were well disposed to take part with the conquerors. The city, therefore, readily capitulated, and was received into vassalage on favorable terms. The inhabitants were to retain their property, their laws, and their religion; their churches and priests were

to be respected; and no other tribute was required of them than such as they had been accustomed to pay to their Gothic kings.

On taking possession of Granada, Taric garrisoned the towers and castles, and left as alcayde or governor a chosen warrior named Betiz Aben Habuz, a native of Arabia Felix, who had distinguished himself by his valor and abilities. This alcayde subsequently made himself king of Granada, and built a palace on one of its hills; the remains of which may be seen at the present day.*

* The house shown as the ancient residence of Aben Habuz is called *la Casa del Gallo*, or the house of the weathercock; so named, says Pedraza, in his history of Granada, from a bronze figure of an Arab horseman, armed with lance and buckler, which once surmounted it, and which varied with every wind. On this warlike weathercock was inscribed, in Arabic characters, —

"Dice el sabio Aben Habuz
Que asi se defiende el Andaluz."

(In this way, says Aben Habuz the Wise,
The Andalusian his foe defies.)

The Casa del Gallo, even until within twenty years, possessed two great halls beautifully decorated with morisco reliefs. It then caught fire and was so damaged as to require to be nearly rebuilt. It is now a manufactory of coarse canvas, and has nothing of the Moorish character remaining. It commands a beautiful view of the city and the vega.

Even the delights of Granada had no power to detain the active and ardent Taric. To the east of the city he beheld a lofty chain of mountains, towering to the sky, and crowned with shining snow. These were the "Mountains of the Sun and Air"; and the perpetual snows on their summits gave birth to streams that fertilized the plains. In their bosoms, shut up among cliffs and precipices, were many small valleys of great beauty and abundance. The inhabitants were a bold and hardy race, who looked upon their mountains as everlasting fortresses that could never be taken. The inhabitants of the surrounding country had fled to these natural fastnesses for refuge, and driven thither their flocks and herds.

Taric felt that the dominion he had acquired of the plains would be insecure until he had penetrated and subdued these haughty mountains. Leaving Aben Habuz, therefore, in command of Granada, he marched with his army across the vega, and entered the folds of the sierra, which stretch towards the south. The inhabitants fled with affright on hearing the Moorish trumpets, or beholding the approach of the turbaned horsemen, and plunged deeper into the recesses of their mountains. As the army advanced, the roads became more and more rugged and difficult; sometimes

climbing great rocky heights, and at other times descending abruptly into deep ravines, the beds of winter torrents. The mountains were strangely wild and sterile; broken into cliffs and precipices of variegated marble. At their feet were little valleys, enamelled with groves and gardens, interlaced with silver streams, and studded with villages and hamlets—but all deserted by their inhabitants. No one appeared to dispute the inroad of the Moslems, who continued their march with increasing confidence, their pennons fluttering from rock and cliff, and the valleys echoing to the din of trumpet, drum, and cymbal. At length they came to a defile where the mountains seemed to have been rent asunder to make way for a foaming torrent. The narrow and broken road wound along the dizzy edge of precipices, until it came to where a bridge was thrown across the chasm. It was a fearful and gloomy pass; great beetling cliffs overhung the road, and the torrent roared below. This awful defile has ever been famous in the warlike history of those mountains, by the name, in former times, of the Barranco de Tocos, and at present of the Bridge of Tablete. The Saracen army entered fearlessly into the pass; a part had already crossed the bridge, and was slowly toiling up the rugged road on the opposite side,

when great shouts arose, and every cliff appeared suddenly peopled with furious foes. In an instant a deluge of missiles of every sort was rained upon the astonished Moslems. Darts, arrows, javelins, and stones, came whistling down, singling out the most conspicuous cavaliers; and at times great masses of rock, bounding and thundering along the mountain side, crushed whole ranks at once, or hurled horses and riders over the edge of the precipices.

It was in vain to attempt to brave this mountain warfare. The enemy were beyond the reach of missiles, and safe from pursuit; and the horses of the Arabs were here an incumbrance rather than an aid. The trumpets sounded a retreat, and the army retired in tumult and confusion, harassed by the enemy until extricated from the defile. Taric, who had beheld cities and castles surrendering without a blow, was enraged at being braved by a mere horde of mountain boors, and made another attempt to penetrate the mountains, but was again waylaid and opposed with horrible slaughter.

The fiery son of Ishmael foamed with rage at being thus checked in his career and foiled in his revenge. He was on the point of abandoning the attempt, and returning to the vega,

Chapter III.

Expedition of Magued against Cordova—Defense of the Patriot Pelistes.

WHILE the veteran Taric was making this wide circuit through the land, the expedition under Magued the renegado proceeded against the city of Cordova. The inhabitants of that ancient place had beheld the great army of Don Roderick spreading like an inundation over the plain of the Guadalquivir, and had felt confident that it must sweep the infidel invaders from the land. What then was their dismay when scattered fugitives, wild with horror and affright, brought them tidings of the entire overthrow of that mighty host, and the disappearance of the king! In the midst of their consternation, the Gothic noble Pelistes arrived at their gates, haggard with fatigue of body and anguish of mind, and leading a remnant of his devoted cavaliers, who had survived the

dreadful battle of the Guadalete. The people of Cordova knew the valiant and steadfast spirit of Pelistes, and rallied round him as a last hope. "Roderick is fallen," cried they, "and we have neither king nor captain; be unto us as a sovereign; take command of our city, and protect us in this hour of peril!"

The heart of Pelistes was free from ambition, and was too much broken by grief to be flattered by the offer of command; but he felt above everything for the woes of his country, and was ready to assume any desperate service in her cause. "Your city," said he, "is surrounded by walls and towers, and may yet check the progress of the foe. Promise to stand by me to the last, and I will undertake your defense." The inhabitants all promised implicit obedience and devoted zeal; for what will not the inhabitants of a wealthy city promise and profess in a moment of alarm? The instant, however, that they heard of the approach of the Moslem troops, the wealthier citizens packed up their effects and fled to the mountains, or to the distant city of Toledo. Even the monks collected the riches of their convents and churches, and fled. Pelistes, though he saw himself thus deserted by those who had the greatest interest in the safety of the city, yet determined not to abandon its de-

fense. He had still his faithful though scanty band of cavaliers, and a number of fugitives of the army, in all amounting to about four hundred men. He stationed guards, therefore, at the gates and in the towers, and made every preparation for a desperate resistance.

In the meantime, the army of Moslems and apostate Christians advanced, under the command of the Greek renegado Magued, and guided by the traitor Julian. While they were yet at some distance from the city, their scouts brought to them a shepherd, whom they had surprised on the banks of the Guadalquivir. The trembling hind was an inhabitant of Cordova, and revealed to them the state of the place and the weakness of its garrison.

"And the walls and gates," said Magued, "are they strong and well guarded?"

"The walls are high and of wondrous strength," replied the shepherd, "and soldiers hold watch at the gates by day and night. But there is one place where the city may be secretly entered. In a part of the wall, not far from the bridge, the battlements are broken, and there is a breach at some height from the ground. Hard by stands a fig-tree, by the aid of which the wall may easily be scaled."

Having received this information, Magued

halted with his army, and sent forward several renegado Christians, partisans of Count Julian, who entered Cordova as if flying before the enemy. On a dark and tempestuous night, the Moslems approached to the end of the bridge which crosses the Guadalquivir, and remained in ambush. Magued took a small party of chosen men, and guided by the shepherd, forded the stream, and groped silently along the wall to the place where stood the fig-tree. The traitors, who had fraudulently entered the city, were ready on the wall to render assistance. Magued ordered his followers to make use of the long folds of their turbans instead of cords, and succeeded without difficulty in clambering into the breach.

Drawing their scimitars, they now hastened to the gate which opened towards the bridge; the guards, suspecting no assault from within, were taken by surprise and easily overpowered; the gate was thrown open, and the army that had remained in ambush rushed over the bridge, and entered without opposition.

The alarm had by this time spread throughout the city; but already a torrent of armed men was pouring through the streets. Pelistes sallied forth with his cavaliers and such of the soldiery as he could collect, and endeavored to repel the foe; but every effort was in vain.

The Christians were slowly driven from street to street and square to square, disputing every inch of ground; until, finding another body of the enemy approaching to attack them in rear, they took refuge in a convent, and succeeded in throwing to and barring the ponderous doors. The Moors attempted to force the gates, but were assailed with such showers of missiles from the windows and battlements that they were obliged to retire. Pelistes examined the convent, and found it admirably calculated for defense. It was of great extent, with spacious courts and cloisters. The gates were massive, and secured with bolts and bars; the walls were of great thickness; the windows high and grated; there was a great tank or cistern of water, and the friars, who had fled from the city, had left behind a good supply of provisions. Here, then, Pelistes proposed to make a stand, and to endeavor to hold out until succor should arrive from some other city. His proposition was received with shouts by his loyal cavaliers, not one of whom but was ready to lay down his life in the service of his commander.

Chapter IV.

Defense of the Convent of St. George by Pelistes.

FOR three long and anxious months did the good knight Pelistes and his cavaliers defend their sacred asylum against the repeated assaults of the infidels. The standard of the true faith was constantly displayed from the loftiest tower, and a fire blazed there throughout the night, as signals of distress to the surrounding country. The watchman from his turret kept a wary lookout over the land, hoping in every cloud of dust to descry the glittering helms of Christian warriors. The country, however, was forlorn and abandoned, or if perchance a human being was perceived, it was some Arab horseman, careering the plain of the Guadalquivir as fearlessly as if it were his native desert.

By degrees the provisions of the convent were consumed, and the cavaliers had to slay their horses, one by one, for food. They suf-

fered the wasting miseries of famine without a murmur, and always met their commander with a smile. Pelistes, however, read their sufferings in their wan and emaciated countenances, and felt more for them than for himself. He was grieved at heart that such loyalty and valor should only lead to slavery or death, and resolved to make one desperate attempt for their deliverance. Assembling them one day in the court of the convent, he disclosed to them his purpose.

"Comrades and brothers in arms," said he, "it is needless to conceal danger from brave men. Our case is desperate; our countrymen either know not or heed not our situation, or have not the means to help us. There is but one chance of escape; it is full of peril, and, as your leader, I claim the right to brave it. To-morrow, at break of day, I will sally forth and make for the city gates at the moment of their being opened; no one will suspect a solitary horseman; I shall be taken for one of those recreant Christians who have basely mingled with the enemy. If I succeed in getting out of the city I will hasten to Toledo for assistance. In all events I shall be back in less than twenty days. Keep a vigilant lookout toward the nearest mountain. If you behold five lights blazing upon its summit, be assured

I am at hand with succor, and prepare yourselves to sally forth upon the city as I attack the gates. Should I fail in obtaining aid, I will return to die with you."

When he had finished, his warriors would fain have severally undertaken the enterprise, and they remonstrated against his exposing himself to such peril; but he was not to be shaken from his purpose. On the following morning, ere the break of day, his horse was led forth, caparisoned, into the court of the convent, and Pelistes appeared in complete armor. Assembling his cavaliers in the chapel, he prayed with them for some time before the altar of the Holy Virgin. Then rising and standing in the midst of them, "God knows, my companions," said he, "whether we have any longer a country; if not, better were we in our graves. Loyal and true have ye been to me, and loyal have ye been to my son, even to the hour of his death; and grieved am I that I have no other means of proving my love for you, than by adventuring my worthless life for your deliverance. All I ask of you before I go, is a solemn promise to defend yourselves to the last like brave men and Christian cavaliers, and never to renounce your faith, or throw yourselves on the mercy of the renegado Magued, or the traitor Julian."

They all pledged their words, and took a solemn oath to the same effect before the altar.

Pelistes then embraced them one by one, and gave them his benediction, and as he did so his heart yearned over them, for he felt towards them, not merely as a companion in arms and as a commander, but as a father; and he took leave of them as if he had been going to his death. The warriors, on their part, crowded round him in silence, kissing his hands and the hem of his surcoat, and many of the sternest shed tears.

The gray of the dawning had just streaked the east, when Pelistes took lance in hand, hung his shield about his neck, and mounting his steed, issued quietly forth from a postern of the convent. He paced slowly through the vacant streets, and the tramp of his steed echoed afar in that silent hour; but no one suspected a warrior, moving thus singly and tranquilly in an armed city, to be an enemy. He arrived at the gate just at the hour of opening; a foraging party was entering with cattle and with beasts of burden, and he passed unheeded through the throng. As soon as he was out of sight of the soldiers who guarded the gate, he quickened his pace, and at length, galloping at full speed, succeeded in gaining the mountains. Here he paused, and alighted

at a solitary farmhouse to breathe his panting steed ; but he had scarce put foot to ground when he heard the distant sound of pursuit, and beheld a horseman spurring up the mountain.

Throwing himself again upon his steed, he abandoned the road and galloped across the rugged heights. The deep dry channel of a torrent checked his career, and his horse stumbling upon the margin, rolled with his rider to the bottom. Pelistes was sorely bruised by the fall, and his whole visage was bathed in blood. His horse, too, was maimed and unable to stand, so that there was no hope of escape. The enemy drew near, and proved to be no other than Magued the renegado general, who had perceived him as he issued forth from the city and had followed singly in pursuit. "Well met, señor alcaid!" exclaimed he, "and overtaken in good time. Surrender yourself my prisoner."

Pelistes made no other reply than by drawing his sword, bracing his shield, and preparing for defense. Magued, though an apostate, and a fierce warrior, possessed some sparks of knightly magnanimity. Seeing his adversary dismounted, he disdained to take him at a disadvantage, but, alighting, tied his horse to a tree.

The conflict that ensued was desperate and doubtful, for seldom had two warriors met so well matched or of equal prowess. Their shields were hacked to pieces, the ground was strewed with fragments of their armor, and stained with their blood. They paused repeatedly to take breath, regarding each other with wonder and admiration. Pelistes, however, had been previously injured by his fall, and fought to great disadvantage. The renegado perceived it, and sought not to slay him, but to take him alive. Shifting his ground continually, he wearied his antagonist, who was growing weaker and weaker from the loss of blood. At length Pelistes seemed to summon up all his remaining strength to make a signal blow; it was skilfully parried, and he fell prostrated upon the ground. The renegado ran up, and putting his foot upon his sword, and the point of his scimitar to his throat, called upon him to ask his life; but Pelistes lay without sense, and as one dead. Magued then unlaced the helmet of his vanquished enemy, and seated himself on a rock beside him, to recover breath. In this situation the warriors were found by certain Moorish cavaliers, who marvelled much at the traces of that stern and bloody combat.

Finding there was yet life in the Christian

knight, they laid him upon one of their horses, and aiding Magued to remount his steed, proceeded slowly to the city. As the convoy passed by the convent, the cavaliers looked forth and beheld their commander borne along bleeding and a captive. Furious at the sight, they sallied forth to the rescue, but were repulsed by a superior force and driven back to the great portal of the church. The enemy entered pell-mell with them, fighting from aisle to aisle, from altar to altar, and in the courts and cloisters of the convent. The greater part of the cavaliers died bravely, sword in hand; the rest were disabled with wounds and made prisoners. The convent, which was lately their castle, was now made their prison, and in after-times, in commemoration of this event, was consecrated by the name of St. George of the Captives.

Chapter V.

Meeting between the Patriot Pelistes and the Traitor Julian.

THE loyalty and prowess of the good knight Pelistes had gained him the reverence even of his enemies. He was for a long time disabled by his wounds, during which he was kindly treated by the Arab chieftains, who strove by every courteous means to cheer his sadness and make him forget that he was a captive. When he was recovered from his wounds they gave him a magnificent banquet, to testify their admiration of his virtues.

Pelistes appeared at the banquet clad in sable armor, and with a countenance pale and dejected, for the ills of his country evermore preyed upon his heart. Among the assembled guests was Count Julian, who held a high command in the Moslem army, and was arrayed in garments of mingled Christian and

morisco fashion. Pelistes had been a close and bosom friend of Julian in former times, and had served with him in the wars in Africa, but when the count advanced to accost him with his wonted amity, he turned away in silence and deigned not to notice him; neither, during the whole of the repast, did he address to him ever a word, but treated him as one unknown.

When the banquet was nearly at a close, the discourse turned upon the events of the war, and the Moslem chieftains, in great courtesy, dwelt upon the merits of many of the Christian cavaliers who had fallen in battle, and all extolled the valor of those who had recently perished in the defense of the convent. Pelistes remained silent for a time, and checked the grief which swelled within his bosom as he thought of his devoted cavaliers. At length, lifting up his voice, "Happy are the dead," said he, "for they rest in peace, and are gone to receive the reward of their piety and valor! I could mourn over the loss of my companions in arms, but they have fallen with honor and are spared the wretchedness I feel in witnessing the thraldom of my country. I have seen my only son, the pride and hope of my age, cut down at my side; I have beheld kindred, friends, and followers falling one by one around

me, and have become so seasoned to those losses that I have ceased to weep. Yet there is one man over whose loss I will never cease to grieve. He was the loved companion of my youth, and the steadfast associate of my graver years. He was one of the most loyal of Christian knights. As a friend, he was loving and sincere; as a warrior, his achievements were above all praise. What has become of him, alas, I know not! If fallen in battle, and I knew where his bones were laid, whether bleaching on the plains of Xeres or buried in the waters of the Guadalete, I would seek them out and enshrine them as the relics of a sainted patriot. Or if, like many of his companions in arms, he should be driven to wander in foreign lands, I would join him in his hapless exile, and we would mourn together over the desolation of our country!"

Even the hearts of the Arab warriors were touched by the lament of the good Pelistes, and they said: "Who was this peerless friend in whose praise thou art so fervent?"

"His name," replied Pelistes, "was Count Julian."

The Moslem warriors started with surprise. "Noble cavalier," exclaimed they, "has grief disordered thy senses? Behold thy friend living and standing before thee, and yet thou

dost not know him? This, this is Count Julian!"

Upon this, Pelistes turned his eyes upon the count, and regarded him for a time with a lofty and stern demeanor; and the countenance of Julian darkened, and was troubled, and his eye sank beneath the regard of that loyal and honorable cavalier. And Pelistes said, "in the name of God, I charge thee, man unknown! to answer. Dost thou presume to call thyself Count Julian?"

The count reddened with anger at these words. "Pelistes," said he, "what means this mockery? thou knowest me well; thou knowest me for Count Julian."

"I know thee for a base impostor!" cried Pelistes. "Count Julian was a noble Gothic knight; but thou appearest in mongrel Moorish garb. Count Julian was a Christian, faithful and devout; but I behold in thee a renegado and an infidel. Count Julian was ever loyal to his king, and foremost in his country's cause; were he living, he would be the first to put shield on neck and lance in rest, to clear the land of her invaders; but thou art a hoary traitor; thy hands are stained with the royal blood of the Goths, and thou hast betrayed thy country and thy God. Therefore, I again repeat, man unknown! if thou sayest thou art

Count Julian, thou liest! My friend, alas, is dead; and thou art some fiend from hell, which hast taken possession of his body to dishonor his memory and render him an abhorrence among men!" So saying, Pelistes turned his back upon the traitor, and went forth from the banquet; leaving Count Julian overwhelmed with confusion, and an object of scorn to all the Moslem cavaliers.

Chapter VI.

How Taric el Tuerto Captured the City of Toledo through the Aid of the Jews, and how he Found the Famous Talismanic Table of Solomon.

WHILE these events were passing in Cordova, the one-eyed Arab general, Taric el Tuerto, having subdued the city and vega of Granada, and the Mountains of the Sun and Air, directed his march into the interior of the kingdom, to attack the ancient city of Toledo, the capital of the Gothic kings. So great was the terror caused by the rapid conquests of the invaders, that at the very rumor of their approach many of the inhabitants, though thus in the very citadel of the kingdom, abandoned it and fled to the mountains with their families. Enough remained, however, to have made a formidable defense; and, as the city was seated on a lofty rock, surrounded by massive walls and towers, and almost girdled by the Tagus, it

threatened a long resistance. The Arab warriors pitched their tents in the vega, on the borders of the river, and prepared for a tedious siege.

One evening, as Taric was seated in his tent, meditating on the mode in which he should assail this rock-built city, certain of the patrols of the camp brought a stranger before him. "As we were going our rounds," said they, "we beheld this man lowered down with cords from a tower, and he delivered himself into our hands, praying to be conducted to thy presence, that he might reveal to thee certain things important for thee to know."

Taric fixed his eye upon the stranger; he was a Jewish rabbi, with a long beard which spread upon his gabardine, and descended even to his girdle. "What hast thou to reveal?" said he to the Israelite. "What I have to reveal," replied the other, "is for thee alone to hear; command, then, I entreat thee, that these men withdraw." When they were alone he addressed Taric in Arabic: "Know, O leader of the host of Islam," said he, "that I am sent to thee on the part of the children of Israel, resident in Toledo. We have been oppressed and insulted by the Christians in the time of their prosperity, and now that they are threatened with siege, they have taken from us all our provisions and our money;

they have compelled us to work like slaves, repairing their walls; and they oblige us to bear arms and guard a part of the towers. We abhor their yoke, and are ready, if thou wilt receive us as subjects, and permit us the free enjoyment of our religion and our property, to deliver the towers we guard into thy hands, and to give thee safe entrance into the city."

The Arab chief was overjoyed at this proposition, and he rendered much honor to the rabbi, and gave orders to clothe him in a costly robe, and to perfume his beard with essences of a pleasant odor, so that he was the most sweet-smelling of his tribe; and he said: "Make thy words good, and put me in possession of the city, and I will do all and more than thou hast required, and will bestow countless wealth upon thee and thy brethren."

Then a plan was devised between them by which the city was to be betrayed and given up. "But how shall I be secured," said he, "that all thy tribe will fulfil what thou hast engaged, and that this is not a stratagem to get me and my people into your power?"

"This shall be thy assurance," replied the rabbi; "ten of the principal Israelites will come to this tent and remain as hostages."

"It is enough," said Taric; and he made oath to accomplish all that he had promised;

and the Jewish hostages came and delivered themselves into his hands.

On a dark night a chosen band of Moslem warriors approached the part of the walls guarded by the Jews, and were secretly admitted into a postern gate and concealed within a tower. Three thousand Arabs were at the same time placed in ambush among rocks and thickets, in a place on the opposite side of the river, commanding a view of the city. On the following morning Taric ravaged the gardens of the valley, and set fire to the farmhouses, and then, breaking up his camp, marched off as if abandoning the siege.

The people of Toledo gazed with astonishment from their walls at the retiring squadrons of the enemy, and scarcely could credit their unexpected deliverance; before night there was not a turban nor a hostile lance to be seen in the vega. They attributed it all to the special intervention of their patron saint, Leocadia; and the following day being Palm Sunday, they sallied forth in procession, man, woman, and child, to the church of that blessed saint, which is situated without the walls, that they might return thanks for her marvellous protection.

When all Toledo had thus poured itself forth, and was marching with cross and relic

and solemn chant towards the chapel, the Arabs who had been concealed in the tower rushed forth, and barred the gates of the city. While some guarded the gates, others dispersed themselves about the streets, slaying all who made resistance; and others kindled a fire and made a column of smoke on the top of the citadel. At sight of this signal, the Arabs in ambush beyond the river rose with a great shout, and attacked the multitude who were thronging to the church of St. Leocadia. There was a great massacre, although the people were without arms and made no resistance; and it is said in ancient chronicles that it was the apostate Bishop Oppas who guided the Moslems to their prey, and incited them to this slaughter. The pious reader, says Fray Antonio Agapida, will be slow to believe such turpitude; but there is nothing more venomous than the rancor of an apostate priest; for the best things in this world, when corrupted, become the worst and most baneful.

Many of the Christians had taken refuge within the church, and had barred the doors, but Oppas commanded that fire should be set to the portals, threatening to put every one within to the sword. Happily the veteran Taric arrived just in time to stay the fury of this reverend renegado. He ordered the trum-

pets to call off the troops from the carnage, and extended grace to all the surviving inhabitants. They were permitted to remain in quiet possession of their homes and effects, paying only a moderate tribute; and they were allowed to exercise the rights of their religion in the existing churches, to the number of seven, but were prohibited from erecting any others. Those who preferred to leave the city were suffered to depart in safety, but not to take with them any of their wealth.

Immense spoil was found by Taric in the alcazar, or royal castle, situated on a rocky eminence in the highest part of the city. Among the regalia treasured up in a secret chamber were twenty-five regal crowns of fine gold, garnished with jacinths, amethysts, diamonds, and other precious stones. These were the crowns of the different Gothic kings who had reigned in Spain; it having been the usage on the death of each king to deposit his crown in this treasury, inscribing on it his name and age.*

When Taric was thus in possession of the city, the Jews came to him in procession, with songs and dances, and the sound of timbrel and psaltery, hailing him as their lord, and reminding him of his promises.

* Conde, *Hist. de las Arabes en España*, c. 12.

The son of Ishmael kept his word with the children of Israel; they were protected in the possession of all their wealth and the exercise of their religion, and were, moreover, rewarded with jewels of gold and jewels of silver and much moneys.*

A subsequent expedition was led by Taric against Guadalaxara, which surrendered without resistance; he moreover captured the city of Medina Celi, where he found an inestimable table which had formed a part of the spoil taken at Rome by Alaric, at the time that the sacred city was conquered by the Goths. It was composed of one single and entire emerald, and possessed talismanic powers; for traditions affirm that it was the work of genii, and had been wrought by them for King Solomon the Wise, the son of David. This marvellous relic was carefully preserved by Taric, as the most precious of all his spoils, being intended by him as a present to the caliph; and in commemoration of it the city was called by the Arabs Medina Almeyda,—that is to say, "The City of the Table." †

* The stratagem of the Jews of Toledo is recorded briefly by Bishop Lucas de Tuy, in his chronicle, but is related at large in the chronicle of the Moor Rasis.

† According to Arabian legends, this table was a mirror revealing all great events; insomuch that by

Having made these and other conquests of less importance, and having collected great quantities of gold and silver, and rich stuffs and precious stones, Taric returned with his booty to the royal city of Toledo.

looking on it the possessor might behold battles and sieges and feats of chivalry, and all actions worthy of renown; and might thus ascertain the truth of all historic transactions. It was a mirror of history therefore; and had very probably aided King Solomon in acquiring that prodigious knowledge and wisdom for which he was renowned.

Chapter VII.

Muza ben Nosier—His Entrance into Spain and Capture of Carmona.

LET us leave for a season the bold Taric in his triumphant progress from city to city, while we turn our eyes to Muza ben Nosier, the renowned emir of Almagreb, and the commander-in-chief of the Moslem forces of the West. When that jealous chieftain had despatched his letter commanding Taric to pause and await his coming, he immediately made every preparation to enter Spain with a powerful reinforcement, and to take command of the conquering army. He left his eldest son, Abdalasis, in Caervan, with authority over Almagreb, or Western Africa. This Abdalasis was in the flower of his youth, and beloved by the soldiery for the magnanimity and the engaging affability which graced his courage.

Muza ben Nosier crossed the Strait of Her-

cules with a chosen force of ten thousand horse and eight thousand foot, Arabs and Africans. He was accompanied by his two sons, Meruan and Abdelola, and by numerous illustrious Arabian cavaliers of the tribe of the Koreish. He landed his shining legions on the coast of Andalusia, and pitched his tents near to the Guadiana. There first he received intelligence of the disobedience of Taric to his orders, and that, without waiting his arrival, the impetuous chieftain had continued his career, and with his light Arab squadrons had overrun and subdued the noblest provinces and cities of the kingdom.

The jealous spirit of Muza was still more exasperated by these tidings; he looked upon Taric no longer as a friend and coadjutor, but as an invidious rival, the decided enemy of his glory, and he determined on his ruin. His first consideration, however, was to secure to himself a share in the actual conquest of the land before it should be entirely subjugated.

Taking guides, therefore, from among his Christian captives, he set out to subdue such parts of the country as had not been visited by Taric. The first place which he assailed was the ancient city of Carmona; it was not of great magnitude, but was fortified with high walls and massive towers, and many of the

fugitives of the late army had thrown themselves into it.

The Goths had by this time recovered from their first panic; they had become accustomed to the sight of Moslem troops, and their native courage had been roused by danger. Shortly after the Arabs had encamped before their walls, a band of cavaliers made a sudden sally one morning before the break of day, fell upon the enemy by surprise, killed above three hundred of them in their tents, and effected their retreat into the city; leaving twenty of their number dead, covered with honorable wounds, and in the very centre of the camp.

On the following day they made another sally, and fell on a different quarter of the encampment; but the Arabs were on their guard, and met them with superior numbers. After fighting fiercely for a time, they were routed, and fled full speed for the city, with the Arabs hard upon their traces. The guards within feared to open the gate, lest with their friends they should admit a torrent of enemies. Seeing themselves thus shut out, the fugitives determined to die like brave soldiers rather than surrender. Wheeling suddenly round, they opened a path through the host of their pursuers, fought their way back to the camp,

and raged about it with desperate fury until they were all slain, after having killed above eight hundred of the enemy.*

Muza now ordered that the place should be taken by storm. The Moslems assailed it on all sides, but were vigorously resisted; many were slain by showers of stones, arrows, and boiling pitch, and many who had mounted with scaling-ladders were thrown headlong from the battlements. The alcayde, Galo, aided solely by two men, defended a tower and a portion of the wall, killing and wounding with a cross-bow more than eighty of the enemy. The attack lasted above half a day, when the Moslems were repulsed with the loss of fifteen hundred men.

Muza was astonished and exasperated at meeting with such formidable resistance from so small a city; for it was one of the few places, during that memorable conquest, where the Gothic valor shone forth with its proper lustre. While the Moslem army lay encamped before the place, it was joined by Magued the renegado, and Count Julian the traitor, with one thousand horsemen; most of them recreant Christians, base betrayers of their country, and more savage in their warfare than the Arabs of the desert. To find favor in the eyes of

* Abulcasim, *Perdida de España*, l. 1, c. 13.

Muza, and to evince his devotion to the cause, the count undertook, by wily stratagem, to put this gallant city in his power.

One evening, just at twilight, a number of Christians, habited as travelling merchants, arrived at one of the gates, conducting a train of mules laden with arms and warlike munitions. "Open the gate quickly," cried they; "we bring supplies for the garrison, but the Arabs have discovered and are in pursuit of us." The gate was thrown open, the merchants entered with their beasts of burden, and were joyfully received. Meat and drink were placed before them, and after they had refreshed themselves they retired to the quarters allotted to them.

These pretended merchants were Count Julian and a number of his partisans. At the hour of midnight they stole forth silently, and assembling together, proceeded to what is called the Gate of Cordova. Here setting suddenly upon the unsuspecting guards, they put them to the edge of the sword, and throwing open the gates, admitted a great body of the Arabs. The inhabitants were roused from their sleep by sound of drum and trumpet and the clattering of horses. The Arabs scoured the streets; a horrible massacre was commenced, in which none were spared but such of the fe-

males as were young and beautiful, and fitted to grace the harems of the conquerors. The arrival of Muza put an end to the pillage and the slaughter, and he granted favorable terms to the survivors. Thus the valiant little city of Carmona, after nobly resisting the open assaults of the infidels, fell a victim to the treachery of apostate Christians.*

* *Cron. Gen. de España*, por Alonzo el Sabio, p. 3, c. I.

Chapter VIII.

Muza Marches against the City of Seville.

AFTER the capture of Carmona, Muza descended into a noble plain, covered with fields of grain, with orchards and gardens, through which glided the soft-flowing Guadalquivir. On the borders of the river stood the ancient city of Seville, surrounded by Roman walls, and defended by its golden tower. Understanding from his spies that the city had lost the flower of its youth in the battle of the Guadalete, Muza anticipated but a faint resistance. A considerable force, however, still remained within the place, and what they wanted in numbers they made up in resolution. For some days they withstood the assaults of the enemy, and defended their walls with great courage. Their want of warlike munitions, however, and the superior force and skill of the besieging army, left them no hope of being able to hold out long. There

were two youthful cavaliers of uncommon valor in the city. They assembled the warriors and addressed them. "We cannot save the city," said they; "but at least, we may save ourselves, and preserve so many strong arms for the service of our country. Let us cut our way through the infidel force, and gain some secure fortress, from whence we may return with augmented numbers for the rescue of the city."

The advice of the young cavaliers was adopted. In the dead of the night the garrison assembled, to the number of about three thousand,—the most part mounted on horseback. Suddenly sallying from one of the gates, they rushed in a compact body upon the camp of the Saracens, which was negligently guarded, for the Moslems expected no such act of desperation. The camp was a scene of great carnage and confusion; many were slain on both sides; the two valiant leaders of the Christians fell covered with wounds, but the main body succeeded in forcing their way through the centre of the army, and in making their retreat to Beja in Lusitania.

Muza was at a loss to know the meaning of this desperate sally. In the morning he perceived the gates of the city wide open. A number of ancient and venerable men pre-

sented themselves at his tent, offering submission and imploring mercy, for none were left in the place but the old, the infirm, and the miserable. Muza listened to them with compassion, and granted their prayer, and the only tribute he exacted was three measures of wheat and three of barley from each house or family. He placed a garrison of Arabs in the city, and left there a number of Jews to form a body of population. Having thus secured two important places in Andalusia, he passed the boundaries of the province, and advanced with great martial pomp into Lusitania.

Chapter IX.

Muza Besieges the City of Merida.

THE army of Muza was now augmented to about eighteen thousand horsemen, but he took with him but few foot-soldiers, leaving them to garrison the conquered towns. He met with no resistance on his entrance into Lusitania. City after city laid its keys at his feet, and implored to be received in peaceful vassalage. One city alone prepared for vigorous defense, the ancient Merida, a place of great extent, uncounted riches, and prodigious strength. A noble Goth named Sacarus was the governor,—a man of consummate wisdom, patriotism and valor. Hearing of the approach of the invaders, he gathered within the walls all the people of the surrounding country, with their horses and mules, their flocks and herds, and most precious effects. To insure for a long time a supply of bread, he filled the magazines

with grain, and erected wind-mills on the churches. This done, he laid waste the surrounding country to a great extent, so that a besieging army would have to encamp in a desert.

When Muza came in sight of this magnificent city he was struck with admiration. He remained for some time gazing in silence upon its mighty walls and lordly towers, its vast extent, and the stately palaces and temples with which it was adorned. "Surely," cried he, at length, "all the people of the earth have combined their power and skill to embellish and aggrandize this city. Allah Achbar! Happy will he be who shall have the glory of making such a conquest!"

Seeing that a place so populous and so strongly fortified would be likely to maintain a long and formidable resistance, he sent messengers to Africa to his son Abdalasis, to collect all the forces that could be spared from the garrisons of Mauritania, and to hasten and reinforce him.

While Muza was forming his encampment, deserters from the city brought him word that a chosen band intended to sally forth at midnight and surprise his camp. The Arab commander immediately took measures to receive them with a counter-surprise. Having formed

his plan, and communicated it to his principal officers, he ordered that, throughout the day, there should be kept up an appearance of negligent confusion in his encampment. The outposts were feebly guarded ; fires were lighted in various places, as if preparing for feasting ; bursts of music and shouts of revelry resounded from different quarters, and the whole camp seemed to be rioting in careless security on the plunder of the land. As the night advanced, the fires were gradually extinguished, and silence ensued, as if the soldiery had sunk into deep sleep after the carousal.

In the meantime, bodies of troops had been secretly and silently marched to reinforce the outposts; and the renegado Magued, with a numerous force, had formed an ambuscade in a deep stone quarry by which the Christians would have to pass. These preparations being made, they awaited the approach of the enemy in breathless silence.

About midnight the chosen force intended for the sally assembled, and the command was confided to Count Tendero, a Gothic cavalier of tried prowess. After having heard a solemn mass and received the benediction of the priest, they marched out of the gate with all possible silence. They were suffered to pass the ambuscade in the quarry without molestation ; as

they approached the Moslem camp everything appeared quiet, for the foot-soldiers were concealed in slopes and hollows, and every Arab horseman lay in his armor beside his steed. The sentinels on the outposts waited until the Christians were close at hand, and then fled in apparent consternation.

Count Tendero gave the signal for assault, and the Christians rushed confidently forward. In an instant an uproar of drums, trumpets, and shrill war-cries burst forth from every side. An army seemed to spring up from the earth; squadrons of horse came thundering on them in front, while the quarry poured forth legions of armed warriors in their rear.

The noise of the terrific conflict that took place was heard on the city walls, and answered by shouts of exultation, for the Christians thought it rose from the terror and confusion of the Arab camp. In a little while, however, they were undeceived by fugitives from the fight, aghast with terror and covered with wounds. "Hell itself," cried they, "is on the side of these infidels; the earth casts forth warriors and steeds to aid them. We have fought, not with men, but devils!"

The greater part of the chosen troops who had sallied were cut to pieces in that scene of massacre, for they had been confounded by the

Ruins of the Castle of Merida.

based on an engraving.

Muza, the ambassadors could scarcely believe their eyes, or that this was the same withered, white-headed old man of whom they had lately spoken with scoffing. His hair and beard were tinged of a ruddy brown; his countenance was refreshed by repose and flushed with indignation, and he appeared a man in the matured vigor of his days. The ambassadors were struck with awe. "Surely," whispered they, one to another, "this must be either a devil or a magician, who can thus make himself old and young at pleasure!"

Muza received them haughtily. "Hence," said he, "and tell your people I grant them the same terms I have already proffered, provided the city be instantly surrendered; but, by the head of Mahomet, if there be any further delay, not one mother's son of ye shall receive mercy at my hands!"

The deputies returned into the city pale and dismayed. "Go forth! go forth!" cried they, "and accept whatever terms are offered; of what avail is it to fight against men who can renew their youth at pleasure? Behold, we left the leader of the infidels an old and feeble man, and to-day we find him youthful and vigorous." *

* Conde, p. 1, c. 13. Ambrosio de Morales. N. B. —In the chronicle of Spain, composed by order of

The place was, therefore, surrendered forthwith, and Muza entered it in triumph. His terms were merciful. Those who chose to remain were protected in persons, possessions, and religion; he took the property of those only who abandoned the city or had fallen in battle; together with all arms and horses, and the treasures and ornaments of the churches. Among these sacred spoils was found a cup made of a single pearl, which a king of Spain, in ancient times, had brought from the temple of Jerusalem when it was destroyed by Nabuchodonosor. This precious relic was sent by Muza to the caliph, and was placed in the principal mosque of the city of Damascus.*

Muza knew how to esteem merit even in an enemy. When Sacarus, the governor of Merida, appeared before him, he lauded him greatly for the skill and courage he had displayed in the defense of his city; and, taking off his own scimetar, which was of great value, girded it upon him with his own hands. "Wear this," said he, "as a poor memorial of my admiration; a soldier of such virtue and valor is worthy of far higher honors."

He would have engaged the governor in his

Alonzo the Wise, this anecdote is given as having happened at the siege of Seville.

* Marmol., *Descrip. de Africa*, t. 1, l. 2.

service, or have persuaded him to remain in the city, as an illustrious vassal of the caliph, but the noble-minded Sacarus refused to bend to the yoke of the conquerors; nor could he bring himself to reside contentedly in his country, when subjected to the domination of the infidels. Gathering together all those who chose to accompany him into exile, he embarked to seek some country where he might live in peace and in the free exercise of his religion. What shore these ocean pilgrims landed upon has never been revealed; but tradition vaguely gives us to believe that it was some unknown island far in the bosom of the Atlantic.*

* Abulcasim, *Perdida de España*, l. 1, c. 13.

Chapter X.

Expedition of Abdalasis against Seville and the "Land of Tadmir."

AFTER the capture of Merida, Muza gave a grand banquet to his captains and distinguished warriors in that magnificent city. At this martial feast were many Arab cavaliers who had been present in various battles, and they vied with each other in recounting the daring enterprises in which they had been engaged, and the splendid triumphs they had witnessed. While they talked with ardor and exultation, Abdalasis, the son of Muza, alone kept silence, and sat with a dejected countenance. At length, when there was a pause, he turned to his father and addressed him with modest earnestness: "My lord and father," said he, "I blush to hear your warriors recount the toils and dangers they have passed while I have done nothing to entitle me to their companionship. When

I return to Egypt and present myself before the caliph, he will ask me of my services in Spain ; what battle I have gained ; what town or castle I have taken. How shall I answer him? If you love me, then, as your son, give me a command, intrust me to an enterprise, and let me acquire a name worthy to be mentioned among men."

The eyes of Muza kindled with joy at finding Abdalasis thus ambitious of renown in arms. "Allah be praised!" exclaimed he, "the heart of my son is in the right place. It is becoming in youth to look upward and be aspiring. Thy desire, Abdalasis, shall be gratified."

An opportunity at that very time presented itself to prove the prowess and discretion of the youth. During the siege of Merida, the Christian troops which had taken refuge at Beja had reinforced themselves from Peñaflor, and suddenly returning, had presented themselves before the gates of the city of Seville.* Certain of the Christian inhabitants threw open the gates and admitted them. The troops rushed to the alcazar, took it by surprise, and put many of the Moslem garrison to the sword ; the residue made their escape, and fled to the Arab camp before Merida, leaving Seville in the hands of the Christians.

*Espinosa, *Antq. y Grand. de Sevilla*, l. 2, c. 3..

The veteran Muza, now that the siege of Merida was at an end, was meditating the recapture and punishment of Seville at the very time when Abdalasis addressed him. "Behold, my son," exclaimed he, "an enterprise worthy of thy ambition! Take with thee all the troops thou hast brought from Africa; reduce the city of Seville again to subjection, and plant thy standard upon its alcazar. But stop not there: carry thy conquering sword into the southern parts of Spain; thou wilt find there a harvest of glory yet to be reaped."

Abdalasis lost no time in departing upon this enterprise. He took with him Count Julian, Magued el Rumi, and the Bishop Oppas, that he might benefit by their knowledge of the country. When he came in sight of the fair city of Seville, seated like a queen in the midst of its golden plain, with the Guadalquivir flowing beneath its walls, he gazed upon it with the admiration of a lover, and lamented in his soul that he had to visit it as an avenger. His troops, however, regarded it with wrathful eyes, thinking only of its rebellion and of the massacre of their countrymen in the alcazar.

The principal people of the city had taken no part in this gallant but fruitless insurrection; and now, when they beheld the army of Abdalasis encamped upon the banks of the

Guadalquivir, would fain have gone forth to make explanations, and intercede for mercy. The populace, however, forbade any one to leave the city, and, barring the gates, prepared to defend themselves to the last.

The place was attacked with resistless fury. The gates were soon burst open; the Moslems rushed in, panting for revenge. They confined not their slaughter to the soldiery in the alcazar, but roamed through every street, confounding the innocent with the guilty in one bloody massacre, and it was with the utmost difficulty that Abdalasis could at length succeed in staying their sanguinary career.*

The son of Muza proved himself as mild in conquest as he had been intrepid in assault. The moderation and benignity of his conduct soothed the terrors of the vanquished, and his wise precautions restored tranquillity. Having made proper regulations for the protection of the inhabitants, he left a strong garrison in the place to prevent any future insurrection, and then departed on the further prosecution of his enterprise.

Wherever he went his arms were victorious, and his victories were always characterized by the same magnanimity. At length he arrived on the confines of that beautiful region, com-

* Conde, p. 1, c. 14.

prising lofty and precipitous mountains and rich and delicious plains, afterwards known by the name of the kingdom of Murcia. All this part of the country was defended by the veteran Theodomir, who, by skillful management, had saved a remnant of his forces after the defeat on the banks of the Guadalete.

Theodomir was a stanch warrior, but a wary and prudent man. He had experienced the folly of opposing the Arabs in open field, where their cavalry and armor gave them such superiority; on their approach, therefore, he assembled all his people capable of bearing arms, and took possession of the cliffs and mountain passes. "Here," said he, "a simple goatherd, who can hurl down rocks and stones, is as good as a warrior armed in proof." In this way he checked and harassed the Moslem army in all its movements,—showering down missiles upon it from overhanging precipices, and waylaying it in narrow and rugged defiles, where a few raw troops could make stand against a host.

Theodomir was in a fair way to baffle his foes, and oblige them to withdraw from his territories; unfortunately, however, the wary veteran had two sons with him, young men of hot and heady valor, who considered all this prudence of their father as savoring of coward-

ice, and who were anxious to try their prowess in the open field. "What glory," said they, "is to be gained by destroying an enemy in this way, from the covert of rocks and thickets?"

"You talk like young men," replied the veteran. "Glory is a prize one may fight for abroad, but safety is the object when the enemy is at the door."

One day, however, the young men succeeded in drawing down their father into the plain. Abdalasis immediately seized on the opportunity, and threw himself between the Goths and their mountain fastnesses. Theodomir saw too late the danger into which he was betrayed. "What can our raw troops do," said he, "against those squadrons of horse that move like castles? Let us make a rapid retreat to Orihuela, and defend ourselves from behind its walls."

"Father," said the eldest son, "it is too late to retreat; remain here with the reserve while my brother and I advance. Fear nothing; am not I your son, and would I not die to defend you?"

"In truth," replied the veteran, "I have my doubts whether you are my son. But if I remain here, and you should all be killed, where then would be my protection? Come," added he, turning to the second son, "I trust that

thou art virtually my son, let us hasten to retreat before it is too late."

"Father," replied the youngest, "I have not a doubt that I am honestly and thoroughly your son, and as such I honor you; but I owe duty likewise to my mother, and when I sallied to the war she gave me her blessing as long as I should act with valor, but her curse should I prove craven and fly the field. Fear nothing, father; I will defend you while living, and even after you are dead. You shall never fail of an honorable sepulture among your kindred."

"A pestilence on ye both," cried Theodomir, "for a brace of misbegotten madmen! What care I, think ye, where ye lay my body when I am dead? One day's existence in a hovel is worth an age of interment in a marble sepulchre. Come, my friends," said he, turning to his principal cavaliers, "let us leave these hot-headed striplings and make our retreat; if we tarry any longer the enemy will be upon us."

Upon this the cavaliers and proud hidalgoes drew up scornfully and tossed their heads: "What do you see in us," said they, "that you think we will show our backs to the enemy? Forward! was ever the good old Gothic watch-word, and with that will we live and die!"

While time was lost in these disputes, the Moslem army kept advancing until retreat was

no longer practicable. The battle was tumultuous and bloody. Theodomir fought like a lion, but it was all in vain ; he saw his two sons cut down, and the greater part of their rash companions, while his raw mountain troops fled in all directions.

Seeing there was no longer any hope, he seized the bridle of a favorite page who was near him, and who was about spurring for the mountains. "Part not from me," said he, "but do thou, at least, attend to my counsel, my son ; and of a truth I believe thou art my son, for thou art the offspring of one of my handmaids who was kind unto me." And indeed the youth marvellously resembled him. Turning then the reins of his own steed, and giving him the spur, he fled amain from the field, followed by the page ; nor did he stop until he arrived within the walls of Orihuela.

Ordering the gates to be barred and bolted, he prepared to receive the enemy. There were but few men in the city capable of bearing arms, most of the youth having fallen in the field. He caused the women, therefore, to clothe themselves in male attire, to put on hats and helmets, to take long reeds in their hands instead of lances, and to cross their hair upon their chins in semblance of beards. With these troops he lined the walls and towers.

It was about the hour of twilight that Abdalasis approached with his army, but he paused when he saw the walls so numerously garrisoned. Then Theodomir took a flag of truce in his hand, and put a herald's tabard on the page, and they two sallied forth to capitulate, and were graciously received by Abdalasis.

"I come," said Theodomir, "on the behalf of the commander of this city, to treat for terms worthy of your magnanimity and of his dignity. You perceive that the city is capable of withstanding a long siege, but he is desirous of sparing the lives of his soldiers. Promise that the inhabitants shall be at liberty to depart unmolested with their property, and the city will be delivered up to you to-morrow morning without a blow; otherwise we are prepared to fight until not a man be left."

Abdalasis was well pleased to get so powerful a place upon such easy terms, but stipulated that the garrison should lay down their arms. To this Theodomir readily assented, with the exception, however, of the governor and his retinue, which was granted out of consideration for his dignity. The articles of capitulation were then drawn out, and when Abdalasis had affixed his name and seal, Theodomir took the pen and wrote his signature. "Behold in me," said he, "the governor of the city!"

Abdalasis was pleased with the hardihood of the commander of the place in thus venturing personally into his power, and entertained the veteran with still greater honor. When Theodomir returned to the city, he made known the capitulation, and charged the inhabitants to pack up their effects during the night and be ready to sally forth during the morning.

At the dawn of day the gates were thrown open, and Abdalasis looked to see a great force issuing forth, but to his surprise beheld merely Theodomir and his page in battered armor, followed by a multitude of old men, women, and children.

Abdalasis waited until the whole had come forth, then turning to Theodomir, "Where," cried he, "are the soldiers whom I saw last evening lining the walls and towers?"

"Soldiers have I none," replied the veteran. "As to my garrison, behold it before you. With these women did I man my walls, and this my page is my herald, guard, and retinue."

Upon this the Bishop Oppas and Count Julian exclaimed that the capitulation was a base fraud and ought not to be complied with; but Abdalasis relished the stratagem of the old soldier, and ordered that the stipulations of the treaty should be faithfully performed.

Nay, so high an opinion did he conceive of the subtle wisdom of this commander that he permitted him to remain in authority over the surrounding country on his acknowledging allegiance and engaging to pay tribute to the caliph ; and all that part of Spain, comprising the beautiful provinces of Murcia and Valencia, was long after known by the Arabic name of its defender, and is still recorded in Arabian chronicles as "The land of Tadmir." *

Having succeeded in subduing this rich and fruitful region, and having gained great reknown for his generosity as well as valor, Abdalasis returned with the chief part of his army to the city of Seville.

* Conde, p. 1. *Cronica del Moro Rasis. Cron. Gen. España,* por Alonzo el Sabio, p. 3, c. 1.

Chapter XI.

Muza Arrives at Toledo—Interview between him and Taric.

WHEN Muza ben Nosier had sent his son Abdalasis to subdue Seville, he departed for Toledo to call Taric to account for his disobedience to his orders; for, amidst all his own successes, the prosperous career of that commander preyed upon his mind. What can content the jealous and ambitious heart? As Muza passed through the land, towns and cities submitted to him without resistance; he was lost in wonder at the riches of the country and the noble monuments of art with which it was adorned; when he beheld the bridges, constructed in ancient times by the Romans, they seemed to him the work, not of men, but of genii. Yet all these admirable objects only made him repine the more that he had not had the exclusive glory of invading and subduing the land; and exas-

perated him the more against Taric, for having apparently endeavored to monopolize the conquest.

Taric heard of his approach, and came forth to meet him at Talavera, accompanied by many of the most distinguished companions of his victories, and with a train of horses and mules laden with spoils, with which he trusted to propitiate the favor of his commander. Their meeting took place on the banks of the rapid river Tietar, which rises in the mountains of Placencia and throws itself into the Tagus. Muza, in former days, while Taric had acted as his subordinate and indefatigable officer, had cherished and considered him as a second self; but now that he had started up to be a rival, he could not conceal his jealousy. When the veteran came into his presence, he regarded him for a moment with a stern and indignant aspect. "Why hast thou disobeyed my orders?" said he. "I commanded thee to await my arrival with reinforcements, but thou hast rashly overrun the country, endangering the loss of our armies and the ruin of our cause."

"I have acted," replied Taric, "in such manner as I thought would best serve the cause of Islam, and in so doing I thought to fulfil the wishes of Muza. Whatever I have done has been as your servant; behold your

share as commander-in-chief of spoils which I have collected." So saying he produced an immense treasure in silver and gold, and costly stuffs and precious stones, and spread it before Muza.

The anger of the Arab commander was still more kindled at the sight of this booty, for it proved how splendid had been the victories of Taric; but he restrained his wrath for the present, and they proceeded together in moody silence to Toledo. When he entered this royal city, however, and ascended to the ancient palace of the Gothic kings, and reflected that all this had been a scene of triumph to his rival, he could no longer repress his indignation. He demanded of Taric a strict account of all the riches he had gathered in Spain, even of the presents he had reserved for the caliph, and above all, he made him yield up his favorite trophy, the talismanic table of Solomon. When all this was done, he again upbraided him bitterly with his disobedience of orders, and with the rashness of his conduct. "What blind confidence in fortune hast thou shown," said he, "in overrunning such a country and assailing such powerful cities with thy scanty force! What madness to venture everything upon a desperate chance, when thou knewest I was coming with a force to make the victory secure.

All thy success has been owing to mere luck, not to judgment nor generalship."

He then bestowed high praises upon the other chieftians for their services in the cause of Islam, but they answered not a word, and their countenances were gloomy and discontented; for they felt the injustice done to their favorite leader. As to Taric, though his eye burned like fire, he kept his passion within bounds. "I have done the best I could to serve God and the caliph," said he emphatically; "my conscience acquits me, and I trust my sovereign will do the same."

"Perhaps he may," replied Muza, bitterly; "but, in the meantime, I cannot confide his interests to a desperado who is heedless of orders and throws everything at hazard. Such a general is unworthy to be intrusted with the fate of armies."

So saying, he divested Taric of his command, and gave it to Magued the renegado. The gaunt Taric still maintained an air of stern composure. His only words were, "The caliph will do me justice!" Muza was so transported with passion at this laconic defiance that he ordered him to be thrown into prison, and even threatened his life.

Upon this, Magued el Rumi, though he had risen by the disgrace of Taric, had the gen-

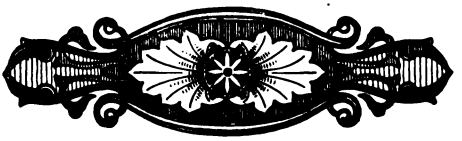
erosity to speak out warmly in his favor. "Consider," said he, to Muza, "what may be the consequences of this severity? Taric has many friends in the army; his actions, too, have been signal and illustrious, and entitle him to the highest honors and rewards, instead of disgrace and imprisonment."

The anger of Muza, however, was not to be appeased; and he trusted to justify his measures by despatching missives to the caliph, complaining of the insubordination of Taric, and his rash and headlong conduct. The result proved the wisdom of the caution given by Magued. In the course of a little while Muza received a humiliating letter from the caliph, ordering him to restore Taric to the command of the soldiers "whom he had so gloriously conducted;" and not render useless "one of the best swords in Islam!" *

It is thus the envious man brings humiliation and reproach upon himself, in endeavoring to degrade a meritorious rival. When the tidings came of the justice rendered by the caliph to the merits of the veteran, there was general joy throughout the army, and Muza read in the smiling countenances of every one around him a severe censure upon his conduct. He concealed, however, his deep humiliation,

* Conde, pt. 1, c. 15.

and affected to obey the orders of his sovereign with great alacrity; he released Taric from prison, feasted him at his own table, and then publicly replaced him at the head of his troops. The army received its favorite veteran with shouts of joy, and celebrated with rejoicings the reconciliation of the commanders; but the shouts of the soldiery were abhorrent to the ears of Muza.



Chapter XII.

Muza Prosecutes the Scheme of Conquest—Siege of Saragossa—Complete Subjugation of Spain.

THE dissensions, which for a time had distracted the conquering army, being appeased, and the Arabian generals being apparently once more reconciled, Muza, as commander-in-chief, proceeded to complete the enterprise by subjugating the northern parts of Spain. The same expeditious mode of conquest that had been sagaciously adopted by Taric was still pursued. The troops were lightly armed, and freed from every superfluous incumbrance. Each horseman, beside his arms, carried a small sack of provisions, a copper vessel in which to cook them, and a skin which served him for surcoat and for bed. The infantry carried nothing but their arms. To each regiment or squadron was allowed a limited number of sumpter-mules and attendants, barely

enough to carry their necessary baggage and supplies; nothing was permitted that could needlessly diminish the number of fighting men, delay their rapid movements, or consume their provisions. Strict orders were again issued, prohibiting, on pain of death, all plunder excepting the camp of an enemy or cities given up to pillage.*

The armies now took their several lines of march. That under Taric departed towards the northeast; beating up the country towards the source of the Tagus, traversing the chain of Iberian or Arragonian Mountains, and pouring down into the plains and valleys watered by the Ebro. It was wonderful to see, in so brief a space of time, such a vast and difficult country penetrated and subdued, and the invading army, like an inundating flood, pouring its streams into the most remote recesses.

While Taric was thus sweeping the country to the northeast, Muza departed in an opposite direction; yet purposing to meet him, and to join their forces in the north. Bending his course westwardly, he made a circuit behind the mountains, and then, advancing into the open country, displayed his banners before Salamanaca, which surrendered without resistance. From hence he continued on towards

* Conde pt. 1, c. 15.

Astorga, receiving the terrified submission of the land; then turning up the Valley of the Douro, he ascended the course of that famous river towards the east; crossed the Sierra de Moncayo, and, arriving on the banks of the Ebro, marched down along its stream, until he approached the strong city of Saragossa, the citadel of all that part of Spain. In this place had taken refuge many of the most valiant of the Gothic warriors—the remnants of armies and fugitives from conquered cities. It was one of the last rallying-points of the land. When Muza arrived, Taric had already been for some time before the place, laying close siege; the inhabitants were pressed by famine, and had suffered great losses in repeated combats; but there was a spirit and obstinacy in their resistance surpassing anything that had yet been witnessed by the invaders.

Muza now took command of the siege, and ordered a general assault upon the walls. The Moslems planted their scaling-ladders, and mounted with their accustomed intrepidity, but were vigorously resisted; nor could all their efforts obtain them a footing upon the battlements. While they were thus assailing the walls, Count Julian ordered a heap of combustibles to be placed against one of the gates, and set on fire. The inhabitants attempted in vain,

from the barbican, to extinguish the flames. They burned so fiercely that in a little while the gate fell from the hinges. Count Julian galloped into the city, mounted upon a powerful charger, himself and his steed all covered with mail. He was followed by three hundred of his partisans, and supported by Magued the renegado, with a troop of horse.

The inhabitants disputed every street and public square; they made barriers of dead bodies, fighting behind these ramparts of their slaughtered countrymen. Every window and roof was filled with combatants; the very women and children joined in the desperate fight, throwing down stones and missiles of all kinds, and scalding water upon the enemy.

The battle raged until the hour of vespers, when the principal inhabitants held a parley, and capitulated for a surrender. Muza had been incensed at their obstinate resistance, which had cost the lives of so many of his soldiers; he knew, also, that in the city were collected the riches of many of the towns of eastern Spain. He demanded, therefore, beside the usual terms, a heavy sum to be paid down by the citizens, called the contribution of blood; as by this they redeemed themselves from the edge of the sword. The people were obliged to comply. They collected all the

jewels of their richest families, and all the ornaments of their temples, and laid them at the feet of Muza; and placed in his power many of their noblest youths as hostages. A strong garrison was then appointed, and thus the fierce city of Saragossa was subdued to the yoke of the conqueror.

The Arab generals pursued their conquests even to the foot of the Pyrenees; Taric then descended along the course of the Ebro, and continued along the Mediterranean coast; subduing the famous city of Valencia, with its rich and beautiful domains, and carrying the success of his arms even to Denia.

Muza undertook with his host a wider range of conquest. He overcame the cities of Barcelona, Gerona, and others that lay on the skirts of the eastern mountains; then crossing into the land of the Franks, he captured the city of Narbonne—in a temple of which he found seven equestrian images of silver, which he brought off as trophies of his victory.* Returning into Spain, he scoured its northern regions along Gallicia and the Asturias; passed triumphantly through Lusitania, and arrived once more in Andalusia, covered with laurels and enriched with immense spoils.

Thus was completed the subjugation of un-

* Conde, pt. 1, c. 16.

happy Spain. All its cities, and fortresses, and strongholds, were in the hands of the Saracens, excepting some of the wild mountain tracts that bordered the Atlantic and extended towards the north. Here, then, the story of the conquest might conclude, but that the indefatigable chronicler, Fray Antonio Agapida, goes on to record the fate of those persons who were most renowned in the enterprise. We shall follow his steps, and avail ourselves of his information, laboriously collected from various sources; and, truly, the story of each of the actors in this great historical drama bears with it its striking moral, and is full of admonition and instruction.

Chapter XIII.

Feud Between the Arab Generals—They are Summoned to Appear Before the Caliph at Damascus—Reception of Taric.

THE heart of Muza ben Nosier was now lifted up, for he considered his glory complete. He held a sway that might have gratified the ambition of the proudest sovereign, for all western Africa and the newly acquired peninsula of Spain were obedient to his rule; and he was renowned throughout all the lands of Islam as the great conqueror of the West. But sudden humiliation awaited him in the very moment of his highest triumph.

Notwithstanding the outward reconciliation of Muza and Taric, a deep and implacable hostility continued to exist between them; and each had busy partisans who distracted the armies by their feuds. Letters were incessantly despatched to Damascus by either party,

exalting the merits of their own leader and decrying his rival. Taric was represented as rash, arbitary, and prodigal, and as injuring the discipline of the army, by sometimes treating it with extreme rigor and at other times giving way to licentiousness and profusion. Muza was lauded as prudent, sagacious, dignified, and systematic in his dealings. The friends of Taric, on the other hand, represented him as brave, generous, and high-minded; scrupulous in reserving to his sovereign his rightful share of the spoils, but distributing the rest bounteously among his soldiers, and thus increasing their alacrity in the service. "Muza, on the contrary," said they, "is grasping and insatiable; he levies intolerable contributions and collects immense treasure, but sweeps it all into his own coffers."

The caliph was at length wearied out by these complaints, and feared that the safety of the cause might be endangered by the dissensions of the rival generals. He sent letters, therefore, ordering them to leave suitable persons in charge of their several commands, and appear, forthwith, before him at Damascus.

Such was the greeting from his sovereign that awaited Muza on his return from the conquest of northern Spain. It was a grievous blow to a man of his pride and ambition; but

he prepared instantly to obey. He returned to Cordova, collecting by the way all the treasures he had deposited in various places. At that city he called a meeting of his principal officers, and of the leaders of the faction of apostate Christians, and made them all do homage to his son Abdalasis, as emir or governor of Spain. He gave this favorite son much sage advice for the regulation of his conduct, and left with him his nephew, Ayub, a man greatly honored by the Moslems for his wisdom and discretion; exhorting Abdalasis to consult him on all occasions, and consider him as his bosom counsellor. He made a parting address to his adherents, full of cheerful confidence; assuring them that he would soon return, loaded with new favors and honors by his sovereign, and enabled to reward them all for their faithful services.

When Muza sallied forth from Cordova, to repair to Damascus, his cavalgada appeared like the sumptuous pageant of some oriental potentate; for he had numerous guards and attendants splendidly armed and arrayed, together with four hundred hostages, who were youthful cavaliers of the noblest families of the Goths, and a great number of captives of both sexes, chosen for their beauty, and intended as presents for the caliph. Then there was a

vast train of beasts of burden, laden with the plunder of Spain ; for he took with him all the wealth he had collected in his conquests and all the share that had been set apart for his sovereign. With this display of trophies and spoils, showing the magnificence of the land he had conquered, he looked forward with confidence to silence the calumnies of his foes.

As he traversed the valley of the Guadalquivir he often turned and looked back wistfully upon Cordova ; and, at the distance of a league, when about to lose sight of it, he checked his steed upon the summit of a hill, and gazed for a long time upon its palaces and towers. " O Cordova ! " exclaimed he, " great and glorious art thou among cities, and abundant in all delights. With grief and sorrow do I part from thee, for sure I am it would give me length of days to abide within thy pleasant walls ! " When he had uttered these words, say the Arabian chronicles, he resumed his wayfaring ; but his eyes were bent upon the ground, and frequent sighs bespoke the heaviness of his heart.

Embarking at Cadiz, he passed over to Africa with all his people and effects, to regulate his government in that country. He divided the command between his sons, Abdelola and Meruan, leaving the former in Tangier

and the latter in Cairvan. Thus having secured, as he thought, the power and prosperity of his family, by placing all his sons as his lieutenants in the country he had conquered, he departed for Syria, bearing with him the sumptuous spoils of the West.

While Muza was thus disposing of his commands, and moving cumbrously under the weight of wealth, the veteran Taric was more speedy and alert in obeying the summons of the caliph. He knew the importance, where complaints were to be heard, of being first in presence of the judge; besides, he was ever ready to march at a moment's warning and had nothing to impede him in his movements. The spoils he had made in his conquests had either been shared among his soldiers, or yielded up to Muza, or squandered away with open-handed profusion. He appeared in Syria with a small train of war-worn followers, and had no other trophies to show than his battered armor and a body seamed with scars. He was received, however, with rapture by the multitude, who crowded to behold one of those conquerors of the West, whose wonderful achievements were the theme of every tongue. They were charmed with his gaunt and martial air, his hard, sunburnt features and his scathed eye. "All hail," cried they, "to the Sword of

Entrance to the Bay of Tangiers.

From an engraving by Jevons.

upon earth, and never regard promise or plighted faith."

"And the people of Afranc; what sayest thou of them?"

"They are infinite in number, rapid in the onset, fierce in battle, but confused and headlong in flight."

"And how fared it with thee among these people? Did they sometimes vanquish thee?"

"Never, by Allah!" cried Taric, with honest warmth; "never did a banner of mine fly the field. Though the enemy were two to one, my Moslems never shunned the combat!"

The caliph was well pleased with the martial bluntness of the veteran, and showed him great honor; and wherever Taric appeared he was the idol of the populace.

Chapter XIV.

Muza Arrives at Damascus—His Interview with the Caliph—The Table of Solomon—A Rigorous Sentence.

SHORTLY after the arrival of Tarič el Tuerto at Damascus the caliph fell dangerously ill, insomuch that his life was despaired of. During his illness, tidings were brought that Muza ben Nosier had entered Syria with a vast cavalcade, bearing all the riches and trophies gained in the western conquests. Now Suleiman ben Abdelmelec, brother to the caliph, was successor to the throne, and he saw that his brother had not long to live, and wished to grace the commencement of his reign by this triumphant display of the spoils of Christendom; he sent messengers, therefore, to Muza, saying: "The caliph is ill and cannot receive thee at present; I pray thee tarry on the road until his recovery." Muza, however, paid no attention to the messages of Suleiman, but rather has-

tened his march to arrive before the death of the caliph. And Suleiman treasured up his conduct in his heart.

Muza entered the city in a kind of triumph, with a long train of horses and mules and camels laden with treasure, and with the four hundred sons of Gothic nobles as hostages, each decorated with a diadem and a girdle of gold; and with one hundred Christian damsels, whose beauty dazzled all beholders. As he passed through the streets he ordered purses of gold to be thrown among the populace, who rent the air with acclamations. "Behold," cried they, "the veritable conqueror of the unbelievers! Behold the true model of a conqueror, who brings home wealth to his country!" And they heaped benedictions on the head of Muza.

The Caliph Waled Almanzor rose from his couch of illness to receive the emir, who, when he repaired to the palace, filled one of its great courts with treasures of all kinds; the halls, too, were thronged with youthful hostages, magnificently attired, and with Christian damsels, lovely as the houris of paradise. When the caliph demanded an account of the conquest of Spain, he gave it with great eloquence; but, in describing the various victories, he made no mention of the name of Taric, but spoke

as if everything had been effected by himself. He then presented the spoils of the Christians as if they had been all taken by his own hands; and when he delivered to the caliph the miraculous table of Solomon, he dwelt with animation on the virtues of that inestimable talisman.

Upon this, Taric, who was present, could no longer hold his peace. "Commander of the Faithful," said he, "examine this precious table, if any part be wanting." The caliph examined the table, which was composed of a single emerald, and he found that one foot was supplied by a foot of gold. The caliph turned to Muza, and said: "Where is the other foot of the table?" Muza answered: "I know not; one foot was wanting when it came into my hands." Upon this, Taric drew from beneath his robe a foot of emerald of like workmanship to the others, and fitting exactly to the table: "Behold, O Commander of the Faithful!" cried he, "a proof of the real finder of the table; and so is it with the greater part of the spoils exhibited by Muza as trophies of his achievements. It was I who gained them, and who captured the cities in which they were found. If you want proof, demand of these Christian cavaliers here present, most of whom I captured; demand of those Moslem warriors who aided me in my battles."

Muza was confounded for a moment, but attempted to vindicate himself. "I spake," said he, "as the chief of your armies, under whose orders and banners this conquest was achieved. The actions of the soldiers are the actions of the commander. In a great victory it is not supposed that the chief of the army takes all the captives, or kills all the slain, or gathers all the booty, though all are enumerated in the records of his triumph." The caliph, however, was wroth, and heeded not his words. "You have vaunted your own deserts," said he, "and have forgotten the deserts of others; nay, you have sought to debase another, who has loyally served his sovereign; the reward of your envy and covetousness be upon your head!" So saying, he bestowed a great part of the spoils upon Taric and the other chiefs, but gave nothing to Muza, and the veteran retired amidst the sneers and murmurs of those present.

In a few days the Caliph Waled died, and was succeeded by his brother Suleiman. The new sovereign cherished a deep resentment against Muza for having presented himself at court contrary to his command, and he listened readily to the calumnies of his enemies—for Muza had been too illustrious in his deeds not to have many enemies. All now took courage

when they found he was out of favor, and they heaped slanders on his head; charging him with embezzling much of the share of the booty belonging to the sovereign. The new caliph lent a willing ear to the accusation, and commanded him to render up all that he had pillaged from Spain. The loss of his riches might have been born with fortitude by Muza, but the stigma upon his fame filled his heart with bitterness. "I have been a faithful servant to the throne from my youth upwards," said he, "and now am I degraded in my old age. I care not for wealth, I care not for life, but let me not be deprived of that honor which God has bestowed upon me!"

The caliph was still more exasperated at his repining, and stripped him of his commands; confiscated his effects, fined him two hundred thousand *pesants* of gold, and ordered that he should be scourged and exposed to the noon-tide sun, and afterwards thrown into prison.* The populace, also, reviled and scoffed at him in his misery, and as they beheld him led forth to the public gaze, and fainting in the sun, they pointed at him with derision, and exclaimed: "Behold the envious man and impostor; this is he who pretended to have conquered the land of the unbelievers!"

* Conde, pt. 1, c. 17.

Chapter XV.

Conduct of Abdalasis as Emir of Spain.

WHILE these events were happening in Syria, the youthful Abdalasis, the son of Muza, remained as emir or governor of Spain. He was of a generous and benignant disposition, but he was open and confiding, and easily led away by the opinions of those he loved. Fortunately his father had left with him, as a bosom counsellor, the discreet Ayub, the nephew of Muza; aided by his advice, he for some time administered the public affairs prudently and prosperously.

Not long after the departure of his father, he received a letter from him, written while on his journey to Syria; it was to the following purport:

"Beloved son; honor of thy lineage; Allah guard thee from all harm and peril! Listen to the words of

thy father. Avoid all treachery, though it should promise great advantage, and trust not in him who counsels it, even though he should be a brother. The company of traitors put far from thee; for how canst thou be certain that he who has proved false to others will prove true to thee? Beware, O my son, of the seductions of love. It is an idle passion, which enfeebles the heart and blinds the judgment; it renders the mighty weak, and makes slaves of princes. If thou shouldst discover any foible of a vicious kind springing up in thy nature, pluck it forth, whatever pang it cost thee. Every error, while new, may easily be weeded out, but if suffered to take root, it flourishes and bears seed and produces fruit an hundredfold. Follow these counsels, O son of my affections, and thou shalt live secure."

Abdalasis meditated upon this letter, for some part of it seemed to contain a mystery which he could not comprehend. He called to him his cousin and counsellor, the discreet Ayub. "What means my father," said he, "in cautioning me against treachery and treason? Does he think my nature so base that it could descend to such means?"

Ayub read the letter attentively. "Thy father," said he, "would put thee on thy guard against the traitors Julian and Oppas, and those of their party who surround thee. What love canst thou expect from men who have been unnatural to their kindred, and what

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loyalty from wretches who have betrayed their country?"

Abdalasis was satisfied with the interpretation, and he acted accordingly. He had long loathed all communion with these men, for there is nothing which the open, ingenuous nature so much abhors as duplicity and treason. Policy, too, no longer required their agency; they had rendered their infamous service, and had no longer a country to betray; but they might turn and betray their employers. Abdalasis, therefore, removed them to a distance from his court, and placed them in situations where they could do no harm, and he warned his commanders from being in anywise influenced by their counsels or aided by their arms.

He now confided entirely in his Arabian troops, and in the Moorish squadrons from Africa, and with their aid he completed the conquest of Lusitania to the ultimate parts of the Algarbe, or west, even to the shores of the great Ocean sea.* From hence he sent his generals to overrun all those vast and rugged

* Algarbe, or Algarbia, in Arabic signifies the west, as Axarkia is the east, Algufia the north, and Aquibla the south. This will serve to explain some of the geographical names on the peninsula which are of Arabian origin.

sierras, which rise like ramparts along the ocean borders of the peninsula; and they carried the standard of Islam in triumph even to the Mountains of Biscay, collecting all manner of precious spoil.

"It is not enough, O Abdalasis," said Ayub, "that we conquer and rule this country with the sword; if we wish our dominion to be secure, we must cultivate the arts of peace, and study to secure the confidence and promote the welfare of the people we have conquered." Abdalasis relished counsel which accorded so well with his own beneficent nature. He endeavored, therefore, to allay the ferment and confusion of the conquest; forbade, under rigorous punishment, all wanton spoil or oppression, and protected the native inhabitants in the enjoyment and cultivation of their lands, and the pursuit of all useful occupations. By the advice of Ayub, also, he encouraged great numbers of industrious Moors and Arabs to emigrate from Africa, and gave them houses and lands; thus introducing a peaceful and Mahometan population in the conquered provinces.

The good effect of the counsels of Ayub were soon apparent. Instead of a sudden but transient influx of wealth, made by the ruin of the land, which left the country desolate, a regular

and permanent revenue sprang up, produced by reviving prosperity, and gathered without violence. Abdalasis ordered it to be faithfully collected, and deposited in coffers by public officers appointed in each province for the purpose; and the whole was sent by ten deputies to Damascus to be laid at the feet of the caliph; not as the spoils of a vanquished country, but as the peaceful trophies of a wisely administered government.

The common herd of warlike adventurers, the mere men of the sword, who had thronged to Spain for the purpose of ravage and rapine, were disappointed at being thus checked in their career, and at seeing the reign of terror and violence drawing to a close. What manner of leader is this said they, who forbids us to make spoil of the enemies of Islam, and to enjoy the land we have wrested from the unbelievers? The partisans of Julian, also, whispered their calumnies. "Behold," said they, "with what kindness he treats the enemies of your faith; all the Christians who have borne arms against you, and withstood your entrance into the land, are favored and protected; but it is enough for a Christian to have befriended the cause of the Moslems to be singled out by Abdalasis for persecution, and to be driven with scorn from his presence."

These insinuations fermented the discontent of the turbulent and rapacious among the Moslems, but all the friends of peace and order and good government applauded the moderation of the youthful emir.

Chapter XVI.

Loves of Abdalasis and Exilona.

ABDALASIS had fixed his seat of government at Seville, as permitting easy and frequent communications with the coast of Africa. His palace was of noble architecture, with delightful gardens extending to the banks of the Guadalquivir. In a part of this palace resided many of the most beautiful Christian females, who were detained as captives, or rather hostages, to insure the tranquillity of the country. Those who were of noble rank were entertained in luxury and magnificence; slaves were appointed to attend upon them, and they were arrayed in the richest apparel and decorated with the most precious jewels. Those of tender age were taught all graceful accomplishments; and even where tasks were imposed, they were of the most elegant and agreeable kind. They embroidered, they sang, they danced, and passed their times

in pleasing revelry. Many were lulled by this easy and voluptuous existence; the scenes of horror through which they had passed were gradually effaced from their minds, and a desire was often awakened of rendering themselves pleasing in the eyes of their conquerors.

After his return from his campaign in Lusitania and during the intervals of public duty, Abdalasis solaced himself in the repose of this palace, and in the society of these Christian captives. He remarked one among them who ever set apart, and neither joined in the labors nor sports of her companions.

She was lofty in her demeanor, and the others always paid her reverence; yet sorrow had given softness to her charms, and rendered her beauty touching to the heart. Abdalasis found her one day in the garden with her companions; they had adorned their heads with flowers, and were singing the songs of their country, but she sat by herself and wept. The youthful emir was moved by her tears, and accosted her in gentle accents: "O fairest of women!" said he, "why dost thou weep, and why is thy heart troubled?" "Alas!" replied she, "have I not cause to weep, seeing how sad is my condition, and how great the height from which I have fallen? In me you behold the wretched Exilona, but lately the wife of Roderick and

the Queen of Spain, now a captive and a slave!" and, having said these words, she cast her eyes upon the earth, and her tears began to flow afresh.

The generous feelings of Abdalasis were aroused at the sight of beauty and royalty in tears. He gave orders that Exilona should be entertained in a style befitting her former rank; he appointed a train of female attendants to wait upon her, and a guard of honor to protect her from all intrusion. All the time that he could spare from public concerns was passed in her society; and he even neglected his divan, and suffered his counsellors to attend in vain, while he lingered in the apartments and gardens of the palace, listening to the voice of Exilona.

The discreet Ayub saw the danger into which he was falling. "O Abdalasis," said he, "remember the words of thy father. 'Beware, my son,' said he, 'of the seductions of love. It renders the mighty weak, and makes slaves of princes!'" A blush kindled on the cheek of Abdalasis, and he was silent for a moment. "Why," said he, at length, "do you seek to charge me with such weakness? It is one thing to be infatuated by the charms of a woman, and another to be touched by her mis-

fortunes. It is the duty of my station to console a princess who has been reduced to the lowest humiliation by the triumphs of our arms. In doing so I do but listen to the dictates of true magnanimity."

Ayub was silent, but his brow was clouded, and for once Abdalasis parted in discontent from his counsellor. In proportion as he was dissatisfied with others or with himself, he sought the society of Exilona, for there was a charm in her conversation that banished every care. He daily became more and more enamoured, and Exilona gradually ceased to weep, and began to listen with secret pleasure to the words of her Arab lover. When, however, he sought to urge his passion, she recollected the light estimation in which her sex was held by the followers of Mahomet, and assumed a countenance grave and severe.

"Fortune," said she, "has cast me at thy feet; behold I am thy captive and thy spoil. But though my person is in thy power, my soul is unsubdued; and know that, should I lack force to defend my honor, I have resolution to wash out all stain upon it with my blood. I trust, however, in thy courtesy as a cavalier to respect me in my reverses, remembering what I have been, and that though the

crown has been wrested from my brow, the royal blood still warms within my veins." *

The lofty spirit of Exilona, and her proud repulse, served but to increase the passion of Abdalasis. He besought her to unite her destiny with his, and share his state and power, promising that she should have no rival nor copartner in his heart. Whatever scruples the captive queen might originally have felt to a union with one of the conquerors of her lord, and an enemy of her adopted faith, they were easily vanquished, and she became the bride of Abdalasis. He would fain have persuaded her to return to the faith of her fathers; but though of Moorish origin, and brought up in the doctrines of Islam, she was too thorough a convert to Christianity to consent, and looked back with disgust upon a religion that admitted a plurality of wives.

When the sage Ayub heard of the resolution of Abdalasis to espouse Exilona he was in despair. "Alas, my cousin!" said he, "what infatuation possesses thee? Hast thou then entirely forgotten the letter of thy father? 'Beware, my son,' said he, 'of love; it is an idle passion, which enfeebles the heart and blinds the judgment.'" But Abdalasis interrupted

* Faxardo, *Corona Gothica*, t. 1, p. 492 Joan, *Mar. de Reb. Hisp.*, l. 6, c. 27.

him with impatience. "My father," said he, "spake but of the blandishments of wanton love; against these I am secured by my virtuous passion for Exilona."

Ayub would fain have impressed upon him the dangers he ran of awakening suspicion in the caliph, and discontent among the Moslems, by wedding the queen of the conquered Roderick, and one who was an enemy to the religion of Mahomet; but the youthful lover only listened to his passion. Their nuptials were celebrated at Seville with great pomp and rejoicings, and he gave his bride the name of Omalisam; that is to say, she of the precious jewels*; but she continued to be known among the Christians by the name of Exilona.

* Conde, pt. 1, c. 17.

Chapter XVII.

Fate of Abdalasis and Exilona—Death of Muza.

POSSESSION, instead of cooling the passion of Abdalasis, only added to its force; he became blindly enamoured of his beautiful bride, and consulted her will in all things; nay, having lost all relish for the advice of the discreet Ayub, he was even guided by the counsels of his wife in the affairs of government. Exilona, unfortunately, had once been a queen, and she could not remember her regal glories without regret. She saw that Abdalasis had great power in the land,—greater even than had been possessed by the Gothic kings,—but she considered it as wanting in true splendor until his brow should be encircled with the outward badge of royalty. One day, when they were alone in the palace of Seville, and the heart of Abdalasis was given up to tenderness, she addressed him in fond yet timid accents:

"Will not my lord be offended," said she, "if I make an unwelcome request?" Abdalasis regarded her with a smile. "What canst thou ask of me, Exilona," said he, "that it would not be a happiness for me to grant?" Then Exilona produced a crown of gold, sparkling with jewels, which had belonged to the king, Don Roderick, and said: "Behold, thou art king in authority; be so in thy outward state. There is majesty and glory in a crown; it gives a sanctity to power." Then putting the crown upon his head, she held a mirror before him, that he might behold the majesty of his appearance. Abadalasis chid her fondly, and put the crown away from him, but Exilona persisted in her prayer. "Never," said she, "has there been a king in Spain that did not wear a crown." So Abdalasis suffered himself to be beguiled by the blandishments of his wife, and to be invested with the crown and sceptre and other signs of royalty.*

It is affirmed by ancient and discreet chroniclers, that Abdalasis only assumed this royal state in the privacy of his palace, and to gratify the eye of his youthful bride; but where was a secret ever confined within the walls of a palace? The assumption of the insignia of the

* *Chron. Gen. de Alonzo el Sabio*, p. 3. Joan, *Mar. de Reb. Hisp.*, lib. 6, c. 27. Conde, pt. 1, c. 19.

ancient Gothic kings was soon rumored about, and caused the most violent suspicions. The Moslems had already felt jealous of the ascendency of this beautiful woman, and it was now confidently asserted that Abdalasis, won by her persuasions, had secretly turned Christian.

The enemies of Abdalasis, those whose rapacious spirits had been kept in check by the beneficence of his rule, seized upon this occasion to ruin him. They sent letters to Damascus, accusing him of apostasy, and of an intention to seize upon the throne in right of his wife, Exilona, as widow of the late King Roderick. It was added, that the Christians were prepared to flock to his standard as the only means of regaining ascendency in their country.

These accusations arrived at Damascus just after the accession of the sanguinary Suleiman to the throne, and in the height of his persecution of the unfortunate Muza. The caliph waited for no proofs in confirmation; he immediately sent private orders that Abdalasis should be put to death, and that the same fate should be dealt to his two brothers who governed in Africa, as a sure means of crushing the conspiracy of this ambitious family.

The mandate for the death of Abdalasis was sent to Abhilbar ben Obeidah and Zeyd ben

Nabegat, both of whom had been cherished friends of Muza, and had lived in intimate favor and companionship with his son. When they read the fatal parchment, the scroll fell from their trembling hands. "Can such hostility exist against the family of Muza?" exclaimed they. "Is this the reward for such great and glorious services?" The cavaliers remained for some time plunged in horror and consternation. The order, however, was absolute, and left them no discretion. "Allah is great," said they, "and commands us to obey our sovereign." So they prepared to execute the bloody mandate with the blind fidelity of Moslems.

It was necessary to proceed with caution. The open and magnanimous character of Abdalasis had won the hearts of a great part of the soldiery, and his magnificence pleased the cavaliers who formed his guard; it was feared, therefore, that a sanguinary opposition would be made to any attempt upon his person. The rabble, however, had been embittered against him from his having restrained their depredations, and because they thought him an apostate in his heart, secretly bent upon betraying them to the Christains! While, therefore, the two officers made vigilant dispositions to check any movement on the part of the soldiery, they

let loose the blind fury of the populace by publishing the fatal mandate. In a moment the city was in a ferment, and there was a ferocious emulation who should be first to execute the orders of the caliph.

Abdalasis was at this time at a palace in the country not far from Seville, commanding a delightful view of the fertile plain of the Guadalquivir. Hither he was accustomed to retire from the tumult of the court, and to pass his time among groves and fountains and the sweet repose of gardens, in the society of Exilona. It was the dawn of day, the hour of early prayer, when the furious populace arrived at this retreat. Abdalasis was offering up his orisons in a small mosque which he had erected for the use of the neighboring peasantry. Exilona was in a chapel in the interior of the palace, where her confessor, a holy friar, was performing mass. They were both surprised at their devotions, and dragged forth by the hands of the rabble. A few guards, who attended at the palace, would have made defense, but they were overawed by the sight of the written mandate of the caliph.

The captives were borne in triumph to Seville. All the beneficent virtues of Abdalasis were forgotten; nor had the charms of Exilona any effect in softening the hearts of the

populace. The brutal eagerness to shed blood, which seems inherent in human nature, was awakened; and woe to the victims when that eagerness is quickened by religious hate. The illustrious couple, adorned with all the graces of youth and beauty, were hurried to a scaffold in the great square of Seville, and there beheaded amidst the shouts and execrations of an infatuated multitude. Their bodies were left exposed upon the ground, and would have been devoured by dogs, had they not been gathered at night by some friendly hand, and poorly interred in one of the courts of their late dwelling.

Thus terminated the loves and lives of Abdalasis and Exilona, in the year of the Incarnation seven hundred and fourteen. Their names were held sacred as martyrs to the Christian faith; but many read in their untimely fate a lesson against ambition and vainglory; having sacrificed real power and substantial rule to the glittering bauble of a crown.

The head of Abdalasis was embalmed and inclosed in a casket, and sent to Syria to the cruel Suleiman. The messenger who bore it overtook the caliph as he was performing a pilgrimage to Mecca. Muza was among the courtiers in his train, having been released from prison. On opening the casket and regarding

its contents, the eyes of the tyrant sparkled with malignant satisfaction. Calling the unhappy father to his side, "Muza," said he, "dost thou know this head?" The veteran recognized the features of his beloved son, and turned his face away with anguish. "Yes! well do I know it," replied he; "and may the curse of God light upon him who has destroyed a better man than himself."

Without adding another word, he retired to Mount Deran, a prey to devouring melancholy. He shortly after received tidings of the death of his two sons, whom he had left in the government of western Africa, and who had fallen victims to the jealous suspicions of the caliph.

His advanced age was not proof against these repeated blows and this utter ruin of his late prosperous family, and he sank into his grave sorrowing and broken-hearted.

Such was the lamentable end of the conqueror of Spain; whose great achievements were not sufficient to atone, in the eye of his sovereign, for a weakness to which all men ambitious of renown are subject; and whose triumphs eventually brought persecution upon himself and untimely death upon his children.

Here ends the legend of the Subjugation of Spain.

LEGEND

OF

COUNT JULIAN AND HIS FAMILY.

LEGEND

OF

COUNT JULIAN AND HIS FAMILY.

IN the preceding legends is darkly shadowed out a true story of the woes of Spain. It is a story full of wholesome admonition, rebuking the insolence of human pride and the vanity of human ambition, and showing the futility of all greatness that is not strongly based on virtue. We have seen, in brief space of time, most of the actors in this historic drama disappearing, one by one, from the scene, and going down, conqueror and conquered, to gloomy and unhonored graves. It remains to close this eventful history by holding up, as a signal warning, the fate of the traitor whose perfidious scheme of vengeance brought ruin on his native land.

Many and various are the accounts given in ancient chronicles of the fortunes of Count Julian and his family, and many are the traditions on the subject still extant among the populace of Spain, and perpetuated in those countless ballads sung by peasants and muleteers, which spread a singular charm over the whole of this romantic land.

He who has travelled in Spain in the true way in which the country ought to be travelled,—sojourning in its remote provinces, rambling among the rugged defiles and secluded valleys of its mountains, and making himself familiar with the people in their out-of-the-way hamlets and rarely-visited neighborhoods,—will remember many a group of travellers and muleteers, gathered of an evening around the door or the spacious hearth of a mountain venta, wrapped in their brown cloaks, and listening with grave and profound attention to the long historic ballad of some rustic troubadour, either recited with the true *ore rotundo* and modulated cadences of Spanish elocution, or chanted to the tinkling of a guitar. In this way he may have heard the doleful end of Count Julian and his family recounted in traditionary rhymes, that have been handed down from generation to generation. The particulars, however, of the following wild legend

are chiefly gathered from the writings of the pseudo-Moor Rasis; how far they may be safely taken as historic facts it is impossible now to ascertain; we must content ourselves, therefore, with their answering to the exactions of poetic justice.

As yet everything had prospered with Count Julian. He had gratified his vengeance; he had been successful in his treason, and had acquired countless riches from the ruin of his country. But it is not outward success that constitutes prosperity. The tree flourishes with fruit and foliage while blasted and withering at the heart. Wherever he went, Count Julian read hatred in every eye. The Christians cursed him as the cause of all their woe; the Moslems despised and distrusted him as a traitor. Men whispered together as he approached, and then turned away in scorn; and mothers snatched away their children with horror if he offered to caress them. He withered under the execration of his fellow-men, and last, and worst of all, he began to loathe himself. He tried in vain to persuade himself that he had but taken a justifiable vengeance; he felt that no personal wrong can justify the crime of treason to one's country.

For a time he sought in luxurious indulgence to soothe or forget the miseries of the mind.

He assembled round him every pleasure and gratification that boundless wealth could purchase, but all in vain. He had no relish for the dainties of his board; music had no charm wherewith to lull his soul, and remorse drove slumber from his pillow. He sent to Ceuta for his wife Frandina, his daughter Florinda, and his youthful son Alarbot; hoping in the bosom of his family to find that sympathy and kindness which he could no longer meet with in this world. Their presence, however, brought him no alleviation. Florinda, the daughter of his heart, for whose sake he had undertaken this signal vengeance, was sinking a victim to its effects. Wherever she went, she found herself a byword of shame and reproach. The outrage she had suffered was imputed to her as wantonness, and her calamity was magnified into a crime. The Christians never mentioned her name without a curse, and the Moslems, the gainers by her misfortunes, spoke of her only by the appellation of Cava, the vilest epithet they could apply to woman.

But the opprobrium of the world was nothing to the upbraiding of her own heart. She charged herself with all the miseries of these disastrous wars—the deaths of so many gallant cavaliers, the conquest and perdition of her country. The anguish of her mind preyed

upon the beauty of her person. Her eye, once soft and tender in its expression, became wild and haggard; her cheek lost its bloom, and became hollow and pallid, and at times there was desperation in her words. When her father sought to embrace her she withdrew with shuddering from his arms, for she thought of his treason and the ruin it had brought upon Spain. Her wretchedness increased after her return to her native country, until it rose to a degree of frenzy. One day, when she was walking with her parents in the garden of their palace, she entered a tower, and having barred the door, ascended to the battlements. From thence she called to them in piercing accents, expressive of her insupportable anguish and desperate determination: "Let this city," said she, "be henceforth called Malacca, in memorial of the most wretched of women, who therein put an end to her days." So saying, she threw herself headlong from the tower, and was dashed to pieces. The city, adds the ancient chronicler, received the name thus given it, though afterwards softened to Malaga, which it still retains in memory of the tragical end of Florinda.

The Countess Frandina abandoned this scene of woe, and returned to Ceuta, accompanied by her infant son. She took with her the re-

mains of her unfortunate daughter, and gave them honorable sepulture in a mausoleum of the chapel belonging to the citadel. Count Julian departed for Carthagena, where he remained plunged in horror at this doleful event.

About this time, the cruel Suleiman, having destroyed the family of Muza, had sent an Arab general, named Alahor, to succeed Abdalasis as emir or governor of Spain. The new emir was of a cruel and suspicious nature, and commenced his sway with a stern severity that soon made those under his command look back with regret to the easy rule of Abdalasis. He regarded with an eye of distrust the renegado Christians who had aided in the conquest, and who bore arms in the service of the Moslems; but his deepest suspicions fell upon Count Julian. "He has been a traitor to his own countrymen," said he; "how can we be sure that he will not prove traitor to us?"

A sudden insurrection of the Christians who had taken refuge in the Asturian Mountains, quickened his suspicions, and inspired him with fears of some dangerous conspiracy against his power. In the height of his anxiety, he bethought him of an Arabian sage named Yuza, who had accompanied him from Africa. This son of science was withered in form, and looked as if he had outlived the usual term of

Malaga.

Redrawn from an old plate.

He forthwith sent a summons to Count Julian to attend him in Cordova. The messenger found him plunged in affliction for the recent death of his daughter. The count excused himself, on account of this misfortune, from obeying the commands of the emir in person, but sent several of his adherents. His hesitation, and the circumstance of his having sent his family across the straits to Africa, were construed by the jealous mind of the emir into proofs of guilt. He no longer doubted his being concerned in the recent insurrections, and that he had sent his family away preparatory to an attempt, by force of arms, to subvert the Moslem domination. In his fury he put to death Siseburto and Evan, the nephews of Bishop Oppas and sons of the former king, Witiza, suspecting them of taking part in the treason. Thus did they expiate their treachery to their country in the fatal battle of the Guadalete.

Alahor next hastened to Carthagena to seize upon Count Julian. So rapid were his movements that the count had barely time to escape with fifteen cavaliers, with whom he took refuge in the strong castle of Marcuello, among the mountains of Aragon. The emir, enraged to be disappointed of his prey, embarked at Carthagena and crossed the straits to

Ceuta, to make captives of the Countess Frandina and her son.

The old chronicle from which we take this part of our legend, presents a gloomy picture of the countess in the stern fortress to which she had fled for refuge—a picture heightened by supernatural horrors. These latter the sagacious reader will admit or reject according to the measure of his faith and judgment; always remembering that in dark and eventful times, like those in question, involving the destinies of nations, the downfall of kingdoms, and the crimes of rulers and mighty men, the hand of fate is sometimes strangely visible, and confounds the wisdom of the worldly wise by intimations and portents above the ordinary course of things. With this proviso, we make no scruple to follow the venerable chronicler in his narration.

Now it so happened that the Countess Frandina was seated late at night in her chamber, in the citadel of Ceuta, which stands on a lofty rock, overlooking the sea. She was revolving in gloomy thought the late disasters of her family, when she heard a mournful noise like that of the sea-breeze moaning about the castle walls. Raising her eyes, she beheld her brother, the Bishop Oppas, at the entrance of the chamber. She advanced to embrace him

but he forbade her with a motion of his hand, and she observed that he was ghastly pale, and that his eyes glared as with lambent flames.

"Touch me not, sister," said he, with a mournful voice, "lest thou be consumed by the fire which rages within me. Guard well thy son, for bloodhounds are upon his track. His innocence might have secured him the protection of Heaven, but our crimes have involved him in our common ruin." He ceased to speak, and was no longer to be seen. His coming and going were alike without noise, and the door of the chamber remained fast bolted.

On the following morning a messenger arrived with tidings that the Bishop Oppas had been made prisoner in battle by the insurgent Christians of the Asturias, and had died in fetters in a tower of the mountains. The same messenger brought word that the Emir Alahor had put to death several of the friends of Count Julian; and obliged him to fly for his life to a castle in Aragon, and was embarking with a formidable force for Ceuta.

The Countess Frandina, as has already been shown, was of courageous heart, and danger made her desperate. There were fifty Moorish soldiers in the garrison; she feared that they would prove treacherous, and take part with

their countrymen. Summoning her officers, therefore, she informed them of their danger, and commanded them to put those Moors to death. The guards sallied forth to obey her orders. Thirty-five of the Moors were in the great square, unsuspicious of any danger, when they were severally singled out by their executioners, and, at a concerted signal, killed on the spot. The remaining fifteen took refuge in a tower. They saw the armada of the emir at a distance, and hoped to be able to hold out until its arrival. The soldiers of the countess saw it also, and made extraordinary efforts to destroy these internal enemies before they should be attacked from without. They made repeated attempts to storm the tower, but were as often repulsed with severe loss. They then undermined it, supporting its foundations by stanchions of wood. To these they set fire, and withdrew to a distance, keeping up a constant shower of missiles to prevent the Moors from sallying forth to extinguish the flames. The stanchions were rapidly consumed, and when they gave way the tower fell to the ground. Some of the Moors were crushed among the ruins; others were flung to a distance and dashed among the rocks; those who survived were instantly put to the sword.

The fleet of the emir arrived at Ceuta about

the hour of vespers. He landed, but found the gates closed against him. The countess herself spoke to him from a tower, and set him at defiance. The emir immediately laid siege to the city. He consulted the astrologer Yuza, who told him that for seven days his star would have the ascendant over that of the youth Alarbot, but after that time the youth would be safe from his power, and would effect his ruin.

Alahor immediately ordered the city to be assailed on every side, and at length carried it by storm. The countess took refuge with her forces in the citadel, and made desperate defense: but the walls were sapped and mined, and she saw that all resistance would soon be unavailing. Her only thoughts now were to conceal her child. "Surely," said she, "they will not think of seeking him among the dead." She led him, therefore, into the dark and dismal chapel. "Thou art not afraid to be alone in this darkness, my child?" said she.

"No, mother," replied the boy; "darkness gives silence and sleep." She conducted him to the tomb of Florinda. "Fearest thou the dead, my child?" "No, mother; the dead can do no harm, and what should I fear from my sister?"

The countess opened the sepulchre. "Listen, my son," said she. "There are fierce and

cruel people who have come hither to murder thee. Stay here in company with thy sister, and be quiet as thou dost value thy life!" The boy, who was of a courageous nature, did as he was bidden, and remained there all that day, and all the night, and the next day until the third hour.

In the meantime the walls of the citadel were sapped, the troops of the emir poured in at the breach, and a great part of the garrison was put to the sword. The countess was taken prisoner, and brought before the emir. She appeared in his presence with a haughty demeanor, as if she had been a queen receiving homage; but when he demanded her son, she faltered and turned pale, and replied: "My son is with the dead."

"Countess," said the emir, "I am not to be deceived; tell me where you have concealed the boy, or tortures shall wring from you the secret."

"Emir," replied the countess, "may the greatest torments be my portion, both here and hereafter, if what I speak be not the truth. My darling child lies buried with the dead."

The emir was confounded by the solemnity of her words; but the withered astrologer Yuza, who stood by his side regarding the countess from beneath his bushed eyebrows,

perceived trouble in her countenance and equivocation in her words. "Leave this matter to me," whispered he to Alahor; "I will produce the child."

He ordered strict search to be made by the soldiery, and he obliged the countess to be always present. When they came to the chapel, her cheek turned pale and her lip quivered. "This," said the subtile astrologer, "is the place of concealment!"

The search throughout the chapel, however, was equally vain, and the soldiers were about to depart, when Yuza remarked a slight gleam of joy in the eye of the countess. "We are leaving our prey behind," thought he; "the countess is exulting."

He now called to mind the words of her asseveration, that her child was with the dead. Turning suddenly to the soldiers, he ordered them to search the sepulchres. "If you find him not," said he, "drag forth the bones of that wanton Cava, that they may be burned, and the ashes scattered to the winds."

The soldiers searched among the tombs, and found that of Florinda partly open. Within lay the boy in the sound sleep of childhood, and one of the soldiers took him gently in his arms to bear him to the emir.

When the countess beheld that her child

was discovered, she rushed into the presence of Alahor, and, forgetting all her pride, threw herself upon her knees before him.

"Mercy! mercy!" cried she, in piercing accents, "mercy on my son—my only child! O emir! listen to a mother's prayer, and my lips shall kiss thy feet. As thou art merciful to him, so may the most high God have mercy upon thee, and heap blessings on thy head."

"Bear that frantic woman hence," said the emir, "but guard her well."

The countess was dragged away by the soldiery, without regard to her struggles and her cries, and confined in a dungeon of the citadel.

The child was now brought to the emir. He had been awakened by the tumult, but gazed fearlessly on the stern countenances of the soldiers. Had the heart of the emir been capable of pity, it would have been touched by the tender youth and innocent beauty of the child; but his heart was as the nether millstone, and he was bent upon the destruction of the whole family of Julian. Calling to him the astrologer, he gave the child into his charge with a secret command. The withered son of the desert took the boy by the hand and led him up the winding staircase of a tower. When they reached the summit, Yuza placed him on the battlements.

"Cling not to me my child," said he; "there is no danger." "Father, I fear not," said the undaunted boy; "yet it is a wondrous height!"

The child looked around with delighted eyes. The breeze blew his curling locks about his face, and his cheek glowed at the boundless prospect; for the tower was reared upon that lofty promontory on which Hercules founded one of his pillars. The surges of the sea were heard far below, beating upon the rocks, the sea-gull screamed and wheeled about the foundations of the tower, and the sails of lofty caraccas were as mere specks on the bosom of the deep.

"Dost thou know yonder land beyond the blue water?" said Yuza.

"It is Spain," replied the boy; "it is the land of my father and my mother."

"Then stretch forth thy hands and bless it, my child," said the astrologer.

The boy let go his hold of the wall; and, as he stretched forth his hands, the aged son of Ishmael, exerting all the strength of his withered limbs, suddenly pushed him over the battlements. He fell headlong from the top of that tall tower, and not a bone in his tender frame but what was crushed upon the rocks beneath.

Alahor came to the foot of the winding stairs.

"Is the boy safe?" cried he.

"He is safe," replied Yuza; "come and behold the truth with thine own eyes."

The emir ascended the tower and looked over the battlements, and beheld the body of the child, a shapeless mass on the rocks far below, and the sea-gulls hovering about it; and he gave orders that it should be thrown into the sea, which was done.

On the following morning the countess was led forth from her dungeon into the public square. She knew that her own death was at hand, but she neither wept nor supplicated. Her hair was dishevelled, her eyes were haggard with watching, and her cheek was as the monumental stone; but there were the remains of commanding beauty in her countenance, and the majesty of her presence awed even the rabble into respect.

A multitude of Christian prisoners were then brought forth, and Alahor cried out: "Behold the wife of Count Julian! behold one of that traitorous family which has brought ruin upon yourselves and upon your country!" And he ordered that they should stone her to death. But the Christians drew back with horror from the deed, and said: "In the hands of God is vengeance; let not her blood be

upon our heads." Upon this the emir swore with horrid imprecations that whoever of the captives refused should himself be stoned to death. So the cruel order was executed, and the Countess Frandina perished by the hands of her countrymen. Having thus accomplished his barbarous errand, the emir embarked for Spain, and ordered the citadel of Ceuta to be set on fire, and crossed the straits at night by the light of its towering flames.

The death of Count Julian, which took place not long after, closed the tragic story of his family. How he died remains involved in doubt. Some assert that the cruel Alahor pursued him to his retreat among the mountains, and, having taken him prisoner, beheaded him; others that the Moors confined him in a dungeon, and put an end to his life with lingering torments; while others affirm that the tower of the castle of Marcuello, near Huesca, in Aragon, in which he took refuge, fell on him and crushed him to pieces. All agree that his latter end was miserable in the extreme and his death violent. The curse of Heaven, which had thus pursued him to the grave, was extended to the very place which had given him shelter; for we are told that the castle is no longer inhabited on account of the strange and horrible noises that are heard in it; and that

visions of armed men are seen above it in the air; which are supposed to be the troubled spirits of the apostate Christians who favored the cause of the traitor.

In after times a stone sepulchre was shown, outside of the chapel of the castle, as the tomb of Count Julian; but the traveller and the pilgrim avoided it, or bestowed upon it a malediction; and the name of Julian has remained a byword and a scorn in the land for the warning of all generations. Such ever be the lot of him who betrays his country.

Here end the legends of the Conquest of Spain.

WRITTEN IN THE ALHAMBRA, *June* 10, 1829.

NOTE TO THE PRECEDING LEGEND.

El licenciado Ardevines (lib. 2, c. 8) dize que dichos Duendos caseros, o los del aire, hazen aparacer exercitos y peleas, como lo que se cuenta por tradicion (y aun algunos personas lo deponen como testigos de vista) de la torre y castello de Marcuello, lugar al pie de las montañas de Aragon (aora inhabitable, por las grandes y espantables ruidos, que en el se oyen) donde se retraxo el Conde Don Julian, causa de la perdicion de España; sobre el qual castillo, deze se ven en el aire ciertas visiones, como de soldados, que el vulgo dize son los cavalleros y gente que le favorecian.

Vide "El Ente Dislucidado," por Fray Antonio de Fuentalapeña, Capuchin. Seccion 3, Subseccion 5, Instancia 8, Num. 644.

As readers unversed in the Spanish language may wish to know the testimony of the worthy and discreet Capuchin friar, Antonio de Fuentalapeña, we subjoin a translation of it :

"The licentiate Ardevines (book ii., chap. 8) says that the said house fairies (or familiar spirits), or those of the air, caused the apparitions of armies and battles,—such as those which are related in tradition (and some persons even depose to the truth of them as eye-witnesses) of the town and castle of Marcuello, a fortress at the foot of the mountains of Aragon (at present uninhabitable, on account of the great and frightful noises heard in it), the place of retreat of Count Don Julian, the cause of the perdition of Spain. It is said that certain apparitions of soldiers are seen in the air, which the vulgar say are those of the courtiers and people who aided him."

CHRONICLE

OF

FERNAN GONZALEZ,

COUNT OF CASTILE.

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OF

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COUNT OF CASTILE.

Introduction.

AT the time of the general wreck of Spain by the sudden tempest of Arab invasion, many of the inhabitants took refuge in the mountains of the Asturias, burying themselves in narrow valleys difficult of access, wherever a constant stream of water afforded a green bosom of pasture-land and scanty fields for cultivation. For mutual protection they gathered together in small villages called castros, or castrellos, with watch-towers and fortresses on impending cliffs, in which they might shelter and defend them-

selves in case of sudden inroad. Thus arose the kingdom of the Asturias, subject to Pelayo and the kings his successors, who gradually extended their dominions, built towns and cities, and after a time fixed their seat of government at the city of Leon.

An important part of the region over which they bore sway was ancient Cantabria, extending from the Bay of Biscay to the Duero, and called Castile from the number of castles with which it was studded. They divided it into seigniories, over which they placed civil and military governors called counts—a title said to be derived from the Latin *comes*, a companion, the person enjoying it being admitted to the familiar companionship of the king, entering into his councils in time of peace, and accompanying him to the field in time of war. The title of count was, therefore, more dignified than that of duke in the time of the Gothic kings.

The power of these counts increased to such a degree that four of them formed a league to declare themselves independent of the crown of Leon. Ordoño II., who was then the king, received notice of it, and got them into his power by force, as some assert, but as others maintain, by perfidious artifice. At any rate, they were brought to court, convicted of

treason, and publicly beheaded. The Castilians flew to arms to revenge their deaths. Ordoño took the field with a powerful army, but his own death defeated all his plans.

The Castilians now threw off allegiance to the kingdom of Leon, and elected two judges to rule over them—one in a civil, the other in a military capacity. The first who filled those stations were Nuño Rasura and Lain Calvo, two powerful nobles, the former descended from Diego Porcello, a count of Lara; the latter, ancestor of the renowned Cid Campeador.

Nuña Rasura, the civil and political judge, was succeeded by his son Gonzalez Nuño, who married Doña Ximena, a daughter of one of the counts of Castile put to death by Ordoño II. From this marriage came Fernan Gonzalez, the subject of the following chronicle.

Chapter I.

Installation of Fernan Gonzalez as Count of Castile—His First Campaign against the Moors · Victory of San Quirce—How the Count Disposed of the Spoils.

THE renowned Fernan Gonzalez, the most complete hero of his time, was born about the year 887. Historians trace his descent to Nuño Belchidez, nephew of the Emperor Charlemagne, and Doña Sula Bella, granddaughter of the prince Don Sancho, rightful sovereign of Spain, but superseded by Roderick, the last of the Gothic kings.

Fernan Gonzalez was hardily educated among the mountains in a strong place called Maron, in the house of Martin Gonzale[illegible]lant and veteran cavalier. From his [illegible]ars he was inured to all kinds of [illegible]perils, taught to hunt, to hawk, to [illegible]reat horse, to manage sword, lan[illegible]ler;

of the Church, and the respect due to its ministers.

2. No person should prosecute another out of Castile at any tribunal of justice or of arms, under pain of being considered a stranger.

3. All Jews and Moors who refused to acknowledge the Christian faith should depart from Castile within two months.

4. That cavaliers of noble blood should treat their tenants and vassals with love and gentleness.

5. That he who slew another, or committed any other grave offense, should make equal measure of atonement.

6. That no one should take the property of another; but, if oppressed by poverty, should come to the count, who ought to be as a father to all.

7. That all should unite and be of one heart, and aid one another in defense of their faith and of their country.

Such were the ordinances of the ancient Cortes of Burgos; brief and simple, and easy to be understood; not, as at the present day, multifarious and perplexed, to the confusion and ruin of clients and the enrichment of lawyers.

Scarce was the installation ended, and while Burgos was yet abandoned to festivity, ere the

young count, with the impatient ardor of youth, caused the trumpets to sound through the streets a call to arms. A captain of the Moorish king of Toledo was ravaging the territory of Castile at the head of seven thousand troops, and against him the youthful count determined to make his first campaign. In the spur of the moment but one hundred horsemen and fifteen hundred foot-soldiers could be collected; but with this slender force the count prepared to take the field. Ruy Velazquez, a valiant cavalier, remonstrated against such rashness, but in vain. "I owe," said the count, "a death to the grave; the debt can never be paid so honorably as in the service of God and my country. Let every one, therefore, address himself heart and hand to this enterprise; for if I come face to face with this Moor, I will most assuredly give him battle." So saying, he knelt before Bishop Sebastian of Salamanca and craved his benediction. The reverend prelate invoked on his head the blessing and protection of Heaven, for his heart yearned toward him; but when he saw the youthful warrior about to depart, he kindled, as it were, with a holy martial fire, and ordering his steed to be saddled he sallied forth with him to the wars.

The little army soon came upon traces of the

enemy in fields laid waste, and the smoking ruins of villages and hamlets. The count sent out scouts to clamber every height and explore every defile. From the summit of a hill they beheld the Moors encamped in a valley which was covered with the flocks and herds swept from the neighboring country. The camp of the marauders was formidable as to numbers, with various standards floating in the breeze; for in this foray were engaged the Moorish chiefs of Saragossa, Denia, and Seville, together with many valiant Moslems who had crossed the straits from Africa to share in what they considered a holy enterprise. The scouts observed, however, that the most negligent security reigned throughout the camp; some reposing, others feasting and revelling, all evidently considering themselves safe from any attack.

Upon hearing this the count led his men secretly and silently to the assault, and came upon the Moors in the midst of their revelry, before they had time to buckle on their armor. The infidels, however, made a brave though confused resistance; the camp was strewn with their dead; many were taken prisoners, and the rest began to falter. The count killed their captain-general with his own hand, in single fight, as he was bravely rallying his

troops. Upon seeing him fall, the Moors threw down their weapons and fled.

Immense booty was found in the Moorish camp,—partly the rich arms and equipments of the infidel warriors, partly the plunder of the country. An ordinary victor would have merely shared the spoils with his soldiery, but the count was as pious as he was brave, and, moreover, had by his side the venerable Bishop of Salamanca as counsellor. Contenting himself, therefore, with distributing one third among his soldiery, he shared the rest with God, devoting a large part to the Church and to the relief of souls in purgatory—a pious custom, which he ever after observed. He moreover, founded a church on the field of battle, dedicated to St. Quirce, on whose festival (the 16th July) this victory was obtained. To this church was subsequently added a monastery where a worthy fraternity of monks was maintained in the odor of sanctity to perpetuate the memory of this victory. All this was doubtless owing to the providential presence of the good bishop on this occasion, and this is one instance of the great benefit derived from those priests and monks and other purveyors of the Church who followed about the Christian camps throughout the long wars with the infidels.

Chapter II.

Of the Sally from Burgos and Surprise of the Castle of Lara—Capitulation of the Town—Visit to Alfonso the Great, King of Leon.

COUNT FERNAN GONZALEZ did not remain idle after the victory of San Quirce. There was at this time an old castle, strong but much battered in the wars, which protected a small town, the remains of the once flourishing city of Lara. It was the ancient domain of his family, but was at present in possession of the Moors. In sooth it had repeatedly been taken and retaken; for in those iron days no castle or fortress remained long under the same masters. One year it was in the hands of the Christians; the next, of the Moors. Some of these castles, with their dependent towns, were sacked, burnt, and demolished; others remained silent and deserted, their original owners fearing to reside in them; and their

ruined towers were only tenanted by bats and owls and screaming birds of prey. Lara had lain for a time in ruins after being captured by the Moors, but had been rebuilt by them with diminished grandeur, and they had a strong garrison in the castle, whence they sallied forth occasionally to ravage the lands of the Christians. The Moorish chieftain of Lara, as has been observed, was among the associated marauders who had been routed in the battle of San Quirce; and the Count Fernan Gonzalez thought this a favorable time to strike for the recovery of his family domain, now that the infidel possessor was weakened by defeat and could receive no succor.

Appointing Rodrigo Velasquez and the Count Don Vela Alvarez to act as governors of Castile during his absence, the count sallied forth from Burgos with a brilliant train of chivalry. Among the distinguished cavaliers who attended him were Martin Gonzalez, Don Gustios Gonzalez, Don Velasco, and Don Lope de Biscaya, which last brought a goodly band of stout Biscayans. The *alfarez*, or standard-bearer, was Orbita Velasquez, who had distinguished himself in the battle of San Quirce. He bore as a standard a great cross of silver, which shone gloriously in front of the host, and is preserved, even to the present day, in

the church of San Pedro de Arlanza. One hundred and fifty noble cavaliers, well mounted, with many esquires and pages of the lance, and three thousand foot-soldiers, all picked men, formed this small but stout-hearted army.

The count led his troops with such caution that they arrived in the neighborhood of Lara without being discovered. It was the vigil of St. John ; the country was wrapped in evening shadows, and the count was enabled to approach near to the place to make his observations. He perceived that his force was too inconsiderable to invest the town and fortress. Besides, about two leagues distant was the gaunt and rock-built castle of Carazo, a presidio or stronghold of the Moors, whence he might be attacked in the rear, should he linger before the fortress. It was evident, therefore, that whatever was to be effected must be done promptly and by sudden surprise. Revolving these things in his mind he put his troops in ambush in a deep ravine where they took their rest, while he kept watch upon the castle; maturing his plans against the morrow. In this way he passed his midsummer's night, the vigil of the blessed St. John.

The festival of St. John is observed as well by Mahometans as Christians. During the night bonfires blazed on the hill-tops and the

Ruins of a Moorish Castle.

From an engraving based on the drawing by Taylor.

dance of the Zambra, while their arms lay scattered among the herbage.

At sight of the Christians, they snatched up their weapons and made a desperate though vain resistance. Within two hours almost all were either slain or captured; a few escaped to the neighboring mountains of Carazo. The town, seeing the castle in the hands of the Christians, and the garrison routed and destroyed, readily capitulated; and the inhabitants were permitted to retain unmolested possession of their houses, on agreeing to pay to the count the same tribute which had been exacted from them by the Moorish king. Don Velasco was left alcaid of the fortress, and the count returned, covered with glory, to his capital of Burgos.

The brilliant victories and hardy deeds of arms with which the youthful Count of Castile had commenced his reign excited the admiration of Alfonso the Great, King of Leon, and he sent missives urging him to appear at his royal court. The count accordingly set forth with a cavalcade of his most approved knights and many of his relatives, sumptuously armed and arrayed and mounted on steeds richly caparisoned. It was a pageant befitting a young and magnificent chief, in the freshness and pleasance of his years.

The king came out of the city to meet him, attended by all the pomp and grandeur of his court. The count alighted, and approached to kiss the king's hand; but Alfonso alighted also, and embraced him with great affection, and the friendship of these illustrious princes continued without interruption throughout the life of the king.

Chapter III.

Expedition against the Fortress of Mugnon—Desperate Defense of the Moors—Enterprise against Castro Xeriz.

MANY are the doughty achievements recorded in ancient chronicles of this most valorous cavalier; among others is his expedition, with a chosen band, against the castle of Mugnon, a place of great importance, which stood at no great distance from Burgos. He sallied from his capital in an opposite direction, to delude the Moorish scouts; but making a sudden turn, came upon the fortress by surprise, broke down the gates, and forced his way in at the head of his troops, having nothing but a dagger in his hand, his lance and sword having been broken in the assault. The Moors fought desperately from court to tower, from tower to wall; and when they saw all resistance vain, many threw themselves from the battlements into the ditch rather

than be made captives. Leaving a strong garrison in the place, the count returned to Burgos.

His next enterprise was against Castro Xeriz, a city with a strong castle, which had been a thorn in the side of Castile—the Moorish garrison often sweeping the road between Burgos and Leon, carrying off travellers, capturing cattle, and plundering convoys of provisions and merchandise. The count advanced against this place in open day, ravaging the country and announcing his approach by clouds of smoke from the burning habitations of the Moors. Abdallah, the alcaid of the fortress, would have made peace, but the count refused all terms. "God," said he, "has appointed me to rescue his holy inheritance from the power of infidels; nothing is to be negotiated but by the edge of the sword."

Abdallah then made a sally with a chosen band of his cavaliers. They at first careered lightly with their Arabian steeds and launched their Moorish darts, but the Christians closed in the old Gothic style, fighting hand to hand. Abdallah fell by the sword of the count, and his followers fled with loosened reins back to the city. The Christians followed hard upon them, strewing the ground with dead. At the gate of the city they were met by Almondir,

the son of Abdallah, who disputed the gateway and the street inch by inch, until the whole place ran with blood. The Moors, driven from the streets, took refuge in the castle, where Almondir inspirited them to a desperate defense, until a stone struck him as he stood on the battlements, and he fell to the earth dead. Having no leader to direct them, the Moors surrendered. When the town was cleared of the dead, and order restored, the count divided the spoils—allotting the houses among his followers, and peopling the place with Christians. He gave the command of it to Layn Bermudez, with the title of count. From him descended an illustrious line of cavaliers termed de Castro, whose male line became extinct in Castile, but continued to flourish in Portugal. The place is said to have been called Castro Xeriz, in consequence of the blood shed in this conflict—*xeriz*, in the Arabic language signifying bloody.*

* Sandoval, p. 301.

Chapter IV.

How the Count of Castile and the King of Leon Made a Triumphant Foray into the Moorish Country—Capture of Salamanca—Of the Challenge Brought by the Herald and of the Count's Defiance.

COUNT FERNAN GONZALEZ was restless, daring, and impetuous; he seldom suffered lance to rest on wall or steed in stable, and no Moorish commander could sleep in quiet who held town or tower in his neighborhood. King Alphonso the Great became emulous of sharing in his achievements, and they made a campaign together against the Moors. The count brought a splendid array of Castilian chivalry into the field, together with a host of Montaneses, hardy and vigorous troops from the Asturias, excellent for marauding warfare. The King of Leon brought his veteran bands, seasoned to battle. With their united forces they ravaged the Moorish country, marking their way with

havoc and devastation; arrived before Salamanca, they took that city by storm after a brave defense, and gave it up to be sacked by the soldiery. After which such of the Moors as chose to remain in it were suffered to retain their possessions as vassals to the king. Having accomplished this triumphant foray, they returned, each one to his capital.

The Count of Castile did not repose long in his palace. One day a Moorish herald, magnificently dressed, rode into the city of Burgos, bringing Fernan Gonzalez a cartel of defiance. It was from a vaunting Moor named Acefali, who had entered the territories of Castile with a powerful force of horse and foot, giving out that he had come to measure strength and prowess with the count in battle. Don Fernan Gonzalez replied to the defiance with weapon in hand at the head of his warriors. A pitched battle ensued, which lasted from early morn until evening twilight. In the course of the fight the count was in imminent peril, his horse being killed under him and himself surrounded, but he was rescued by his cavaliers. After great bloodshed, the Moors were routed and pursued beyond the borders. The spoil gained in this battle was devoutly expended in repairing the churches of Castile and the Montaneses.

Chapter V.

A Night Assault upon the Castle of Carazo—The Moorish Maiden who Betrayed the Garrison.

IN those warlike times of Spain every one lived with sword in hand; there was scarcely a commanding cliff or hill-top but had its castle. Moors and Christians regarded each other from rival towers and battlements perched on opposite heights, and were incessantly contending for the dominion of the valleys.

We have seen that Count Fernan Gonzalez had regained possession of the ancient town and fortress of Lara, the domain of his ancestors; but it will be recollected that within two leagues' distance stood the Moorish presidio of Carazo. It was perched like an eagle's nest on the summit of a mountain, and the cragged steepness of its position and its high and thick walls seemed to render it proof against all assault. The Moors who garrisoned it were

fierce marauders, who used to sweep down like birds of prey from their lofty nest, pounce upon the flocks and dwellings of the Christians, make hasty ravages, and bear away their spoils to the mountain-top. There was no living with safety or tranquillity within the scope of their maraudings.

Intelligence of their misdeeds was brought to the count at Burgos. He determined to have that castle of Carazo, whatever might be the cost: for this purpose he called a council of his chosen cavalier. He did not conceal the peril of the enterprise, from the crag-built situation of the castle, its great strength, and the vigilance and valor of its garrison. Still the Castilian cavaliers offered themselves to carry the fortress or die.

The count sallied secretly from Burgos with a select force, and repaired in the night-time to Lara, that the Moors might have no intimation nor suspicion of his design. In the midst of the next night the castle gate was quietly opened, and they issued forth as silently as possible, pursuing their course in the deep shadows of the valley until they came to the foot of the mountain of Carazo. Here they remained in ambush, and sent forth scouts. As the latter prowled about, the day began to dawn, and they heard a female voice singing

above them on the side of the mountain. It was a Moorish damsel coming down, with a vessel upon her head. She descended to a fountain which gushed forth beneath a grove of willows, and as she sang she began to fill her vessel with water. The spies issued from their concealment, seized her, and carried her to Count Fernan Gonzalez.

Overcome by terror or touched by conviction, the Moorish damsel threw herself on her knees before the count, declared her wish to turn Christian, and offered, in proof of her sincerity, to put him in a way of gaining possession of the castle. Being encouraged to proceed, she told them there was to be a marriage feast that day in the castle, and of course a great deal of revelry, which would put the garrison off its guard. She pointed to a place where he might lie in ambush with his troops in sight of the tower, and promised, when a favorable moment presented for an attack, to give a signal with a light.

The count regarded her for a time with a fixed and earnest gaze, but saw no faltering nor change of countenance. The case required bold measures, combined with stratagem; so he confided in her, and permitted her to return to the castle. All the day he lay in ambush with his troops, each man his hand upon his

weapon to guard against surprise. The distant sound of revelry from the castle, with now and then the clash of cymbals, the bray of trumpets, and a strain of festive music, showed the gayety that reigned within. Night came on; lights gleamed from walls and windows, but none resembling the appointed signal. It was almost midnight, and the count began to fear the Moorish damsel had deceived him, when to his great joy he saw the signal-light gleaming from one of the towers.

He now sallied forth with his men, and all, on foot, clambered up the steep and rugged height. They had almost attained the foot of the towers when they were descried by a sentinel, who cried with a loud voice: "The foe! the foe! to arms! to arms!" The count, followed by his hardy cavaliers, rushed forward to the gate, crying: "God and Saint Millan!" The whole castle was instantly in an uproar. The Moors were bewildered by the sudden surprise and the confusion of a night assault. They fought bravely but irregularly. The Christians had but one plan and one object. After a hard struggle and great bloodshed, they forced the gate and made themselves masters of the castle.

The count remained several days, fortifying the place and garrisoning it, that it might not

fall again into the possession of the Moors. He bestowed magnificent rewards on the Moorish damsel who had thus betrayed her countrymen; she embraced the Christian faith, to which she had just given such a signal proof of devotion, though it is not said whether the count had sufficient confidence in her conversion and her newly moulted piety to permit her to remain in the fortress she had betrayed.

Having completed his arrangements, the count departed on his return, and encountered on the road his mother, Doña Nuña Fernandez, who, exulting in his success, had set out to visit him at Carazo. The mother and son had a joyful meeting, and gave the name of Contreras to the place of their encounter.

Chapter VI.

Death of Alfonso, King of Leon—The Moors Determined to Strike a Fresh Blow at the Count, who Summons All Castile to his Standard—Of his Hunt in the Forest while Waiting for the Enemy, and of the Hermit that he Met with.

ALFONSO THE GREAT was now growing old and infirm, and his queen and sons, taking advantage of his age and feebleness, endeavored by harsh treatment to compel him to relinquish the crown. Count Fernan Gonzalez interceded between them, but in vain; and Alfonso was at length obliged to surrender his crown to his oldest son, Don Garcia. The aged monarch then set out upon a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Iago; but, falling ill of his mortal malady, sent for the count to come to him to his death-bed at Zamora. The count hastened thither with all zeal and loyalty. He succeeded in effecting a reconciliation between Alfonso and his son Don

Garcia in his dying moments, and was with the monarch when he quietly breathed his last. The death of the king gave fresh courage to the Moors, and they thought this a favorable moment to strike a blow at the rising power of the count. Abderahman was at this time King of Cordova and Miramamolin, or sovereign, of the Moors in Spain. He had been enraged at the captors of the castle of Carazo, and the other victories of the count; and now that the latter had no longer the King of Leon to back him, it was thought he might, by a vigorous effort, be completely crushed. Abderahman accordingly assembled at Cordova a great army of Moorish warriors, both those of Spain and Africa, and sent them, under the command of Almanzor, to ravage the country of Count Fernan Gonzalez. This Almanzor was the most valiant Moorish general in Spain, and one on whom Abderahman depended as upon his right hand.

On hearing of the impending danger, Count Fernan Gonzalez summoned all men of Castile capable of bearing arms to repair to his standard at Muñon. His force when assembled was but small, but composed of the bravest chivalry of Castile, any one knight of which he esteemed equal to ten Moors. One of the most eminent of his cavaliers was Don Gonzalo Gustios, of

Lara, who brought seven valiant sons to the field—the same afterwards renowned in Spanish story as the seven princes of Lara. With Don Gonzalo came also his wife's brother, Ruy or Rodrigo Velazquez, a cavalier of great prowess.

In the meantime tidings continued to arrive of the great force of the enemy, which was said to cover the country with its tents. The name of the Moorish general, Almanzor, likewise inspired great alarm. One of the count's cavaliers, therefore, Gonzalo Diaz, counselled him not to venture upon an open battle against such fearful odds; but rather to make a *tula*, or ravaging inroad, into the country of the Moors, by way of compelling them to make a truce. The count, however, rejected his advice. "As to their numbers," said he, "one lion is worth ten sheep, and thirty wolves could kill thirty thousand lambs. As to that Moor, Almanzor, be assured we shall vanquish him, and the greater his renown the greater will be the honor of the victory."

The count now marched his little army to Lara, where he paused to await the movements of the enemy. While his troops were lying there he mounted his horse one day and went forth with a few attendants to hunt in the forests which bordered the river Arlanza. In the course of the chase he roused a monstrous boar,

and pursued it among the rocks and brakes until he became separated from his attendants. Still following the track of the boar, he came to the foot of a rocky precipice, up which the animal mounted by a rugged and narrow path, where the horse could not follow. The count alighted, tied his horse to an oak, and clambered up the path, assisting himself at times with his boar-spear. The path led to a close thicket of cedars, surrounding a small edifice partly built of stone and partly hewn out of the solid rock. The boar had taken refuge within, and had taken his stand behind what appeared to be a mass of stone. The count was about to launch his javelin when he beheld a cross of stone standing on what he now perceived was an altar, and he knew that he was in a holy place. Being as pious as he was brave, the good count now knelt before the altar and asked pardon of God for the sin he had been on the point of committing; and when he had finished this prayer, he added another for victory over the foe.

While he was yet praying, there entered a venerable monk, Fray Pelayo by name, who, seeing him to be a Christian knight, gave him his benediction. He informed the count that he resided in this hermitage in company with

two other monks—Arsenio and Silvano. The count marvelled much how they could live there in a country overrun by enemies, and which had for a long time, and but recently, been in the power of the infidels. The hermit replied that in the service of God they were ready to endure all hardships. It is true they suffered much from cold and hunger, being obliged to live chiefly on herbs and roots; but by secret paths and tracks they were in communication with other hermitages scattered throughout the country, so that they were enabled to aid and comfort each other. They could also secretly sustain in the faith the Christians who were held in subjection by the Moors, and afford them places of refuge and concealment in cases of extremity.

The count now opened his heart to the good hermit, revealing his name and rank, and the perils impending over him from the invasion of the infidel. As the day was far spent, Fray Pelayo prevailed upon him to pass the night in the hermitage, setting before him barley bread and such simple fare as his cell afforded.

Early in the morning the count went forth and found the hermit seated beneath a tree on a rock, whence he could look far and wide out of the forest and over the surrounding country. The hermit then accosted him as one whose

holy and meditative life and mortifications of the flesh had given him the power to look into the future almost with the eye of prophecy. "Of a truth, my son," said he, "there are many trials and hardships in store for thee; but be of good cheer, thou wilt conquer these Moors, and wilt increase thy power and possessions." He now revealed to the count certain signs and portents which would take place during the battle. "When thou shalt see these," said he, "be assured that Heaven is on thy side, and thy victory secure." The count listened with devout attention. "If these things do indeed come to pass," said he, "I will found a church and convent in this place, to be dedicated to St. Peter, the patron saint of this hermitage; and when I die my body shall be interred here." Receiving then the benediction of the holy friar he departed.

Chapter VII.

The Battle of the Ford of Cascajares.

WHEN Count Fernan Gonzalez returned to his troops he found them in great alarm at his absence, fearing some evil had befallen him; but he cheered them with an account of his adventure and of the good fortune predicted by the hermit.

It was in the month of May, on the day of the Holy Cross, that the Christian and Moslem armies came in sight of each other. The Moors advanced with a great sound of trumpets, atabals, and cymbals, and their mighty host extended over hill and valley. When they saw how small was the force of the Christians they put up derisive shouts, and rushed forward to surround them.

Don Fernan Gonzalez remained calm and unmoved upon a rising ground, for the hour was at hand when the sign of victory prom-

ised by the hermit was to take place. Near by him was a youthful cavalier, Pedro Gonzalez by name, native of La Puente de Hitero, of fiery courage but vainglorious temper. He was cased in shining armor, and mounted on a beautiful horse impatient of spirit as himself, and incessantly foaming and champing on the bit and pawing the earth. As the Moors drew near, while there was yet a large space between them and the Christains, this fiery cavalier could no longer contain himself, but giving reins to his steed set off headlong to encounter the foe; when suddenly the earth opened, man and horse rushed downward into an abyss, and the earth closed as before.

A cry of horror ran through the Christian ranks, and a panic was like to seize upon them, but Don Fernan Gonzalez rode in front of them, exclaiming: "This is the promised sign of victory. Let us see how Castilians defend their lord, for my standard shall be borne into the thickest of the fight." So saying, he ordered Orbita Fernandez to advance his standard; and when his troops saw the silver cross glittering on high and borne toward the enemy, they shouted "Castile! Castile!" and rushed forward to the fight. Immediately around the standard fought Don Gonzalo Gustios and his seven sons, and he was, say the old chroniclers,

like a lion leading his whelps into the fight. Wherever they fought their way, they might be traced by the bodies of bleeding and expiring infidels. Few particulars of this battle remain on record; but it is said that the Moors were as if struck with sudden fear and weakness, and fled in confusion. Almanzor himself escaped by the speed of his horse, attended by a handful of his cavaliers.

In the camp of the Moors was found vast booty in gold and silver, and other precious things, with sumptuous armor and weapons. When the spoil was divided and the troops were refreshed, Don Fernan Gonzalez went with his cavaliers in pious procession to the hermitage of San Pedro.* Here he gave much

* It does not appear that Count Fernan Gonzalez kept his promise of founding a church and monastery on the site of the hermitage. The latter edifice remained to after ages. "It stands," says Sandoval, "on a precipice overhanging the river Arlanza, insomuch that it inspires dread to look below. It is extremely ancient; large enough to hold a hundred persons. Within the chapel is an opening like a chasm, leading down to a cavern larger than the church, formed in the solid rock, with a small window which overlooks the river. It was here the Christians used to conceal themselves."

As a corroboration of the adventure of the Count of Castile, Sandoval assures us that in his day the oak

silver and gold to the worthy Fray Pelayo, to be expended in masses for the souls of the Christian warriors who had fallen in battle, and in prayers for further victories over the infidels; after which he returned in triumph to his capital of Burgos.

still existed to which Don Fernan Gonzalez tied his horse, when he alighted to scramble up the hill in pursuit of the boar. The worthy Fray Agapida, however, needed no corroboration of the kind, swallowing the whole story with the ready credence of a pious monk. The action here recorded was known by the name of the battle of the Ford of Cascajares.

Sandoval gives a different account of the fate of the hermits. He says that Almanzor, in a rage at their prognostics, overthrew their chapel, and, without alighting from his horse, ordered the three monks to be beheaded in his presence. "This martyrdom," he adds, "is represented in an ancient painting of the chapel which still exists."

Chapter VIII.

Of the Message Sent by the Count to Sancho II., King of Navarre, and the Reply—Their Encounter in Battle.

THE good Count of Castile was so inspirited by this signal victory over the Moors, and their great general Almanzor, that he determined, now that he had a breathing-spell from infidel warfare, to redress certain grievances sustained from one of his Christian neighbors. This was Don Sancho II., King of Navarre, surnamed Abarca, either from the *abarcas* or shepherd shoes, which he had worn in early life, when brought up in secrecy and indigence, during the overthrow of his country by the Moors, or from making his soldiers wear shoes of the kind in crossing the snowy Pyrenees. It was a name by which the populace delighted to call him.

This prince had recovered all Navarre from the infidels, and even subjected to his crown

all Biscay, or Cantabria, and some territory beyond the Pyrenees, on the confines of France. Not content with these acquisitions, he had made occasional inroads into Castile, in consequence of a contest respecting the territories of Najarra and Rioxa, to which he laid claim. These incursions he repeated whenever he had peace or truce with the Moors.*

Count Fernan Gonzalez, having now time, as has been observed, to attend to these matters, sent an ambassador to King Sancho, charged with a courteous but resolute message. "I come, Señor," said the ambassador to the king, "by command of the Count Fernan Gonzalez of Castile, and this is what I am told to say. You have done him much wrong in times past, by leaguing with the infidels and making inroads into his territories while he was absent or engaged in war. If you will amend your ways in this respect, and remedy the past, you will do him much pleasure; but if you refuse, he sends you his defiance."

King Sancho Abarca was lost in astonishment and indignation at receiving such a message from a count of Castile. "Return to the count," said he, "and tell him I will amend nothing; that I marvel at his insolence, and

* Sandoval. *The Five Bishops.* Mariana, lib. 8, c. 5, p. 367. *Cron. Gen. de España,* part 3, c. 18, fol. 53.

hold him for a madman for daring to defy me. Tell him he has listened to evil counsel, or a few trifling successes against the Moors have turned his brain; but it will be very different when I come to seek him, for there is not town or tower from which I will not drag him forth."*

The ambassador returned with this reply, nor did he spare the least of its scorn and bitterness. Upon this the count assembled his cavaliers and councillors, and represented the case. He exhorted them to stand by him in seeking redress for this insult and injury to their country and their chieftain. "We are not equal in numbers to the enemy, but we are valiant men, united and true to each other, and one hundred good lances, all in the hands of chosen cavaliers, all of one heart and mind, are worth three hundred placed by chance in the hands of men who have no common tie." The cavaliers all assured him they would follow and obey him as loyal subjects of a worthy lord, and would prove their fealty in the day of battle.

A little army of staunch Castilians was soon assembled, the silver cross was again reared on high by the standard-bearer Orbita Velasquez, and the count advanced resolutely a day's journey into the kingdom of Navarre, for his

* *Cron. Gen. de España*, ut supra.

maxim was to strike quickly and sudden. King Sancho wondered at his daring, but hastened to meet him with a greatly superior force. The armies came in sight of each other at a place called the Era de Gollanda.

The count now addressed his men. "The enemy," said he, "are more numerous than we; they are vigorous of body and light of foot, and are dexterous in throwing darts. They will have the advantage if they attack us; but if we attack them and close manfully, we shall get the field of them before they have time to hurl their darts and wound us. For my part, I shall make for the king. If I can but revenge the wrongs of Castile upon his person I care not how soon I die."

As the armies drew near each other the Castilians, true to the orders of their chieftain, put up the war-cry, "Castile! Castile!" and rushing forward, broke through the squadrons of Navarre. Then followed a fight so pitiless and deadly, says an old chronicler, that the strokes of their weapons resounded through the whole country. The count sought King Sancho throughout the whole field; they met and recognized each other by their armorial bearings and devices. They fought with fury, until both fell from their horses as if dead. The Castilians cut their way through the mass of the enemy, and

surrounded their fallen chief. Some raised him from the earth while others kept off the foe. At first they thought him dead, and were loud in their lamentations; but when the blood and dust were wiped from his face he revived and told them not to heed him, for his wounds were nothing; but to press on and gain the victory, for he had slain the King of Navarre.

At hearing this they gave a great shout and returned to the fight; but those of Navarre, seized with terror at the fall of their king, turned their backs and fled.

The count then caused the body of the king to be taken from among the slain and to be conducted, honorably attended, to Navarre. Thus fell Sancho Abarca, King of Navarre, and was succeeded by his son Don Garcia, sursurnamed the Trembler.

Chapter IX.

How the Count of Toulouse Makes a Campaign against Castile, and how he Returns in his Coffin.

WHILE the Count Fernan Gonzalez was yet ill of his wounds in his capital, and when his soldiers had scarce laid by their cuirasses and hung up their shields and lances, there was a fresh alarm of war. The Count of Toulouse and Poictiers, the close friend and ally of King Sancho Abarca, had come from France with a host to his assistance, but finding him defeated and slain, raised his standard to make a campaign, in his revenge, against the Castilians. The Navarrese all gathered round him, and now an army was on foot more powerful than the one which had recently been defeated.

Count Fernan Gonzalez, wounded as he was, summoned his troops to march against this new enemy; but the war-worn Castilians, vexed at being thus called again to arms before they

had time to breathe, began to murmur. "This is the life of the very Devil," said they, "to go about day and night, without a moment's rest. This lord of ours is assuredly Satan himself, and we are lesser devils in his employ, always busy entrapping the souls of men. He has no pity for us, so battered and worn, nor for himself, so badly wounded. It is necessary that some one should talk with him, and turn him from his madness."

Accordingly a hardy cavalier, Nuño Laynez, remonstrated with the count against further fighting until he should be cured of his wounds and his people should have time to repose; for mortal men could not support this kind of life. "Nor is this urged through cowardice," added he, "for your men are ready to fight for and defend you as they would their own souls."

"Well have you spoken, Nuño Laynez," replied the count; "yet for all this I am not minded to defer this fight. A day lost never returns. An opportunity foregone can never be recalled. The warrior who indulges in repose will never leave the memory of great deeds behind him. His name dies when his soul leaves the body. Let us, therefore, make the most of the days and hours, allotted us, and crown them with such glorious deeds

that the world shall praise us in all future time."

When Nuño Laynez repeated these generous words to the cavaliers, the blood glowed in their veins, and they prepared themselves manfully for the field; nor did the count give them time to cool before he put himself at their head and marched to meet the enemy. He found them drawn up on the opposite side of a river which was swollen and troubled by recent rains. Without hesitation he advanced to ford it, but his troops were galled by flights of darts and arrows as they crossed, and received with lances on the water's edge; the bodies of many floated down the turbid stream, and many perished on the banks. They made good their crossing, however, and closed with the enemy. The fight was obstinate and the Castilians were hardly pressed, being so inferior in number. Don Fernan Gonzalez galloped along the front of the enemy. "Where is the Count of Toulouse?" cried he; "let him come forth and face me,—me, Fernan Gonzalez of Castile, who defy him to single combat!" The count answered promptly to the defiance. No one from either side presumed to interfere while the two counts encountered, man to man and horse to horse, like honorable and generous cavaliers. They rushed

upon each other with the full speed of their horses; the lance of Don Fernan pierced through all the armor and accoutrements of the Count of Toulouse and bore him out of the saddle, and before he touched the earth his soul had already parted from his body. The men of Toulouse, seeing their chief fall dead, fled amain, but were pursued, and three hundred of them taken.*

The field being won, Count Fernan Gonzalez alighted and took off the armor of the Count of Toulouse, with his own hands, and wrapped him in a *xemete*, or Moorish mantle, of great value, which he had gained when he conquered Almanzor. He ordered a coffin to be made, and covered with cloth of gold, and studded with silver nails, and he put therein the body of the count, and delivered it to the captive cavaliers, whom he released and furnished with money for their expenses, making them swear not to leave the body of the count until they had conducted it to Toulouse. So the count, who had come from France in such chivalrous state, at the head of an array of shining warriors, returned in his coffin with a mourning train of vanquished cavaliers, while Count Fernan Gonzalez conducted his victorious troops in triumph back to Burgos.

* *Cron. Gen. de España.*

This signal victory took place in the year of our Redemption 926, in the beginning of the reign of Alfonso the Monk on the throne of Leon and the Asturias.*

* Mariana, lib. 8, c. 5, p. 367.

Chapter X.

How the Count Went to Receive the Hand of a Princess, and was Thrown into a Dungeon—Of the Stranger that Visited him in his Chains, and of the Appeal that he Made to the Princess for his Deliverance.

GARCIA II., who had succeeded to the throne of Navarre on the death of his father, was brave of soul, though surnamed El Tembloso, or The Trembler. He was so called because he was observed to tremble on going into battle; but, as has been said of others, it was only the flesh that trembled, foreseeing the dangers into which the spirit would carry it. This king was deeply grieved at the death of his father, slain by Count Fernan Gonzalez, and would have taken vengeance by open warfare, but he was counselled by his mother, the Queen Teresa, to pursue a subtler course. At her instigation overtures were made to the count

to settle all the feuds between Navarre and Castile by a firm alliance, and to this end it was proposed that the count should take to wife Doña Sancha, the sister of King Garcia and daughter of King Sancho Abarca. The count accepted gladly the proffered alliance, for he had heard of the great merit and beauty of the princess, and was pleased with so agreeable a mode of putting an end to all their contests. A conference was accordingly appointed between the count and King Garcia, to take place at Ciruena, each to be attended only by five cavaliers.

The count was faithful to his compact, and appeared at the appointed place with five of the bravest of his cavaliers; but the king arrived with five-and-thirty chosen men, all armed *cap-a-pie*. The count, suspecting treachery, retreated with his cavaliers into a neighboring hermitage, and, barricading the door, defended himself throughout the day until nightfall. Seeing there was no alternative, he at length capitulated and agreed to surrender himself a prisoner, and pay homage to the king, on the latter assuring him, under oath, that his life should be secure. King Garcia the Trembler, having in this wily manner gained possession of the count, threw him in irons and conducted him a prisoner to Navarre,

where he confined him in a strong castle called Castro Viejo. At his intercession, however, his five cavaliers were released, and carried back to Castile the doleful tidings of his captivity.

Now it came to pass that a brave Norman count, who was performing a pilgrimage to St. Iago of Compostella, heard that the Count Fernan Gonzalez, whose renown had spread far and wide, lay in chains in Castro Viejo. Having a vehement desire to see the man of whom fame had spoken so loudly, he repaired to the castle, and bribed his way to the prison of the count. When he entered and beheld so noble a cavalier in a solitary dungeon and in chains, he was sore at heart. The count looked up with wonder as this stranger stood before him in pilgrim garb and with sorrowful aspect, but when he learned his name and rank, and the object of his visit, he gave him the right hand of friendship.

The pilgrim count left the castle more enamoured than ever of the character of Count Fernan Gonzalez. At a festival of the court he beheld the Princess Sancha, who had served as a lure to draw the good count into the power of his enemies, and he found her of surpassing beauty, and of a gentle and loving demeanor; so he determined to seek an opportunity to speak with her in private, for surely,

thought he, in such a bosom must dwell the soft pity of womanhood. Accordingly one day as the princess was walking in the garden with her ladies, he presented himself before her in his pilgrim's garb, and prayed to speak with her apart, as if on some holy mission. And when they were alone, "How is this, princess," said he, "that you are doing such great wrong to Heaven, to yourself, and to all Christendom?" The princess started, and said: "What wrong have I done?" Then replied the pilgrim count: "Behold, for thy sake the noblest of cavaliers, the pride of Spain, the flower of chivalry, the hope of Christendom, lies in a dungeon, fettered with galling chains. What lady but would be too happy to be honored with the love of Count Fernan Gonzalez; and thou hast scorned it! How will it tell for thy fame in future times, that thou wast made a snare to capture an honorable knight; that the gentlest, the bravest, the most generous of cavaliers was inveigled by the love of thee to be thrown into a dungeon? How hast thou reversed the maxims of chivalry! Beauty has ever been the friend of valor; but thou hast been its foe! The fair hands of lovely dames have ever bestowed laurels and rewards on those gallant knights who sought and deserved their loves; thou

hast bestowed chains and a dungeon. Behold, the Moors rejoice in his captivity, while all Christians mourn. Thy name will be accursed throughout the land like that of Cava; but shouldst thou have the heroism to set him free, thou wilt be extolled above all Spanish ladies. Hadst thou but seen him as I have done, alone, abandoned, enchained; yet so noble, so courteous, so heroic in his chains, that kings upon their thrones might envy the majesty of his demeanor. If thou couldst feel love for man, thou shouldst do it for this knight; for I swear to thee on this cross which I bear, that never was there king or emperor in the world so worthy of woman's love." When the pilgrim count had thus spoken, he left the princess to meditate upon his words.

Chapter XI.

Of the Meditations of the Princess, and their Result —Her Flight from the Prison with the Count, and Perils of the Escape—The Nuptials.

THE Princess Sancha remained for some time in the garden, revolving in her mind all that she had just heard, and tenderness for the Count Fernan Gonzalez began to awaken in her bosom; for nothing so touches the heart of woman as the idea of valor suffering for her sake. The more the princess meditated the more she became enamoured. She called to mind all she had heard of the illustrious actions of the count. She thought upon the pictures just drawn of him in prison—so noble, so majestic in his chains. She remembered the parting words of the pilgrim count—"Never was there king or emperor so worthy of a woman's love." "Alas!" cried she, "was there ever a lady more unfortunate than I? All the love and devotion of this noble cavalier I might have

had, and behold it has been made a mockery. Both he and myself have been wronged by the treachery of my brother."

At length the passion of the princess arose to such a height that she determined to deliver the count from the misery of which she had been made the instrument. So she found means one night to bribe the guards of his prison, and made her way to his dungeon. When the count saw her, he thought it a beautiful vision, or some angel sent from heaven to comfort him, for certainly her beauty surpassed the ordinary loveliness of woman.

"Noble cavalier," said the princess, "this is no time for idle words and ceremonies. Behold before you the Princess Doña Sancha; the word which my brother brake I am here to fulfil. You came to receive my hand, and, instead, you were thrown in chains. I come to yield you that hand, and to deliver you from those chains. Behold, the door of your prison is open, and I am ready to fly with you to the ends of the earth. Swear to me one word, and when you have sworn it, I know your loyalty too well to doubt that you will hold your oath sacred. Swear that if I fly with you, you will treat me with the honor of a knight; that you will make me your wife, and never leave me for any other woman."

The count swore all this on the faith of a Christian cavalier; and well did he feel disposed to keep his oath, for never before had he beheld such glorious beauty.

So the princess led the way, and her authority and her money had conquered the fidelity of the guards, so that they permitted the count to sally forth with her from the prison.

It was a dark night, and they left the great road and climbed a mountain. The count was so fettered by his chains that he moved with difficulty, but the princess helped and sometimes almost carried him; for what will not delicate woman perform when her love and pity are fully aroused. Thus they toiled on their way until the day dawned, when they hid themselves in the cliffs of the mountain, among rocks and thickets. While thus concealed they beheld an archpriest of the castle, mounted on a mule with a falcon on his fist, hawking about the lower part of the mountain. The count knew him to be a base and malignant man, and watched his movements with great anxiety. He had two hounds beating about the bushes, which at length got upon the traces of the count and princess, and discovering them set up a violent barking. Alighting from his mule, the archpriest clambered up to where the fugitives were concealed.

He knew the count, and saw that he had escaped. "Aha! traitor," cried he, drawing his sword, "think not to escape from the power of the king." The count saw that resistance was in vain, for he was without weapons and in chains, and the archpriest was a powerful man, exceeding broad across the shoulders; he sought, therefore, to win him by fair words, promising that if he would aid him to escape he would give him a city in Castile, for him and his heirs forever. But the archpriest was more violent than ever, and held his sword at the breast of the count to force him back to the castle. Upon this the princess rushed forward, and with tears in her eyes implored him not to deliver the count into the hands of his enemies. But the heart of the priest was inflamed by the beauty of the princess, and thinking her at his mercy, "Gladly," said he, "will I assist the count to escape, but upon one condition." Then he whispered a proposal which brought a crimson glow of horror and indignation into the cheeks of the princess, and he would have laid his hand upon her, but he was suddenly lifted from the earth by the strong grasp of the count, who bore him to the edge of a precipice and flung him headlong down; and his neck was broken in the fall.

The count then took the mule of the archpriest, his hawk, and his hounds, and after keeping in the secret parts of the mountain all day, he and the princess mounted the mule at night, and pursued their way, by the most rugged and unfrequented passes, towards Castile.

As the day dawned they found themselves in an open plain at the foot of the mountains, and beheld a body of horsemen riding towards them, conducting a car, in which sat a knight in armor, bearing a standard. The princess now gave all up for lost. "These," said she, "are sent by my brother in pursuit of us; how can we escape, for this poor animal has no longer strength nor speed to bear us up the mountains?" Upon this Count Fernan alighted, and drawing the sword of the archpriest, placed himself in a narrow pass. "Do you," said he to the princess, "turn back and hasten to the mountains, and dearly shall it cost him who attempts to follow you." "Not so," replied the princess; "for the love of me hast thou been brought from thine own domain and betrayed into all these dangers, and I will abide to share them with thee."

The count would have remonstrated, when to his astonishment he saw, as the car drew near, that the knight seated in it was clad in

his own armor, with his own devices, and held his own banner in his hand. "Surely," said he, crossing himself, "this is enchantment"; but on looking still nearer, he recognized among the horsemen Nuño Sandias and Nuño Laynez, two of his most faithful knights. Then his heart leaped for joy. "Fear nothing," cried he to the princess; "behold my standard, and behold my vassals. Those whom you feared as enemies shall kneel at your feet and kiss your hand in homage."

Now so it appears that the tidings of the captivity of the count had spread mourning and consternation throughout Castile, and the cavaliers assembled together to devise means for his deliverance. And certain of them had prepared this effigy of the count, clad in his armor and bearing his banner and devices, and having done homage and sworn fealty to it as they would have done to the count himself, they had placed it in his car and set forth with it as a leader, making a vow, in the spirit of ancient chivalry, never to return to their homes until they should have delivered the count from his captivity.

When the cavaliers recognized the count, they put up shouts of joy, and kissed his hands and the hands of the princess in token of devoted loyalty. And they took off the fetters

of the count and placed him in the car, and the princess beside him, and returned joyfully to Castile.

Vain would be the attempt to describe the transports of the multitude as Count Fernan Gonzalez entered his noble capital of Burgos. The Princess Sancha, also, was hailed with blessings wherever she passed, as the deliverer of their lord and the savior of Castile, and shortly afterwards her nuptials with the count were celebrated with feasting and rejoicing and tilts and tournament, which lasted for many days.

Chapter XII.

King Garcia Confined in Burgos by the Count—The Princess Intercedes for his Release.

THE rejoicings for the marriage of Count Fernan Gonzalez with the beautiful Princess Sancha were scarcely finished when King Garcia the Trembler came with a powerful army to revenge his various affronts. The count sallied forth to meet him, and a bloody and doubtful battle ensued. The Navarrese at length were routed and the king was wounded and taken prisoner in single combat by Count Fernan, who brought him to Burgos and put him in close confinement.

The Countess Doña Sancha was now almost as much afflicted at the captivity of her brother as she had been at that of the count, and interceded with her husband for his release. The count, however, retained too strong a recollection of the bad faith of King Garcia and of his own treacherous and harsh imprisonment to be

easily moved, and the king was kept in duress for a considerable time. The countess then interested the principal cavaliers in her suit, reminding them of the services she had rendered them in aiding the escape of their lord. Through their united intercessions the count was induced to relent; so King Garcia the Trembler was released and treated with great honor, and sent back to his dominions with a retinue befitting his rank.

Chapter VIII.

Of the Expedition against the Ancient City of Sylo—The Unwitting Trespass of the Count into a Convent, and his Compunctions thereupon.

VOLUMES would it take to follow the Count Fernan Gonzalez in his heroic achievements against the infidels,—achievements which give to sober history almost the air of fable. I forbear to dwell at large upon one of his campaigns, wherein he scoured the valley of Laguna; passed victoriously along the banks of the Douro, building towers and castles to keep the country in subjection; how he scaled the walls of the castle of Ormaz, being the first to mount, sword in hand; how by the valor of his arm he captured the city of Orma; how he took the town of Sandoval, the origin of the cavaliers of Sandoval, who were anciently called Salvadores; how he made an inroad even to Madrid, then a

strongly fortified village, and having taken and sacked it, returned in triumph to Burgos.

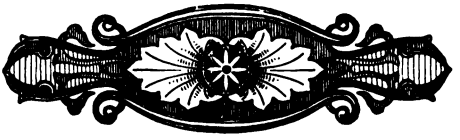
But it would be wronging the memory of this great and good cavalier to pass in silence over one of his exploits, in which he gave a singular instance of his piety. This was in an expedition against the ancient city of Sylo. It was not a place of much value in itself, being situated in a cold and sterile country, but it had become a stronghold of the Moors, whence they carried on their warfare. This place the count carried by assault, entering it in full armor, on his steed, overturning and slaying all who opposed him. In the fury of his career he rode into a spacious edifice which he supposed to be a mosque, with the pious intention of slaying every infidel he might find within. On looking round, however, great was his astonishment at beholding images of saints, the blessed cross of our Saviour, and various other sacred objects, which announced a church devoted to the veritable faith. Struck with remorse, he sprang from his horse, threw himself upon his knees, and with many tears implored pardon of God for the sin he had unknowingly committed. While he was yet on his knees, several monks of the Order of St. Dominic approached, meagre in looks and squalid in attire, but hailing him with great

joy as their deliverer. In sooth this was a convent of San Sebastian, the fraternity of which had remained captives among the Moors, supporting themselves poorly by making baskets, but permitted to continue in the exercise of their religion.

Still filled with pious compunction for the trespass he had made, the count ordered that the shoes should be taken from his horse and nailed upon the door of the church; for never, said he, shall they tread any other ground after having trodden this holy place. From that day, we are told, it has been the custom to nail the shoes of horses on the portal of that convent — a custom which has extended to many other places.

The worthy Fray Prudencia de Sandoval records a marvellous memento of the expedition of the count against this city, which remained, he says, until his day. Not far from the place, on the road which passes by Lara, is to be seen the print of his horse's hoofs in a solid rock, which has received the impression as though it had been made in softened wax.* It is to be presumed that the horse's hoofs had been gifted with miraculous hardness in reward to the count for his pious oblation of the shoes.

* Sandoval, p. 313.



Chapter XIV.

Of the Moorish Host that Came up from Cordova, and how the Count Repaired to the Hermitage of San Pedro, and Prayed for Success against them, and Received Assurance of Victory in a Vision—Battle of Hazinas.

THE worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, from whose manuscripts this memoir is extracted, passes by many of the striking and heroic deeds of the count, which crowd the pages of ancient chroniclers; but the good friar ever is sure to dwell with delight upon any of those miraculous occurrences which took place in Spain in those days, and which showed the marked interposition of Heaven in behalf of the Christian warriors in their battles with the infidels. Such was the renowned battle of Hazinas, which, says Agapida, for its miraculous events is worthy of eternal blazon.

Now so it was that the Moorish king of Cordova had summoned all the faithful, both

of Spain and Africa, to assist him in recovering the lands wrested from him by the unbelievers, and especially by Count Fernan Gonzalez in his late victories; and such countless legions of turbaned warriors were assembled that it was said they covered the plains of Andalusia like swarms of locusts.

Hearing of their threatening approach, the count gathered together his forces at Piedrafita, while the Moors encamped in Hazinas. When, however, he beheld the mighty host arrayed against him, his heart for once was troubled with evil forebodings, and calling to mind the cheering prognostications of the friar Pelayo on a like occasion, he resolved to repair again to that holy man for counsel. Leaving his camp, therefore, secretly, he set out, accompanied by two cavaliers, to seek the chapel which he had ordered to be built at the hermitage of San Pedro, on the mountain overhanging the river Arlanza, but when arrived there he heard to his great grief that the worthy friar was dead.

Entering the chapel, however, he knelt down at the altar and prayed for success in the coming fight; humbly representing that he had never, like many of the kings and nobles of Spain, done homage to the infidels and acknowledged them for sovereigns. The count

remained a long time at prayer, until sleep gradually stole over him; and as he lay slumbering before the altar the holy Fray Pelayo appeared before him in a vision, clad in garments as white as snow. "Why sleepest thou, Fernan Gonzalez?" said he; "arise, and go forth, and know that thou shalt conquer those Moors. For, inasmuch as thou art a faithful vassal of the Most High, he has commanded the Apostle San Iago and myself, with many angels, to come to thy aid, and we will appear in the battle clad in white armor, with each of us a red cross upon our pennon. Therefore arise, I say, and go hence with a valiant heart."

The count awoke, and while he was yet musing upon the vision he heard a voice saying: "Arise, and get thee hence; why dost thou linger? Separate thy host into three divisions: enter the field of battle by the east, with the smallest division, and I will be with thee; and let the second division enter by the west, and that shall be aided by San Iago; and let the third division enter by the north. Know that I am San Millan who come to thee with this message."

The count departed joyfully from the chapel, and returned to his army; and when he told his troops of this, his second visit to the her-

mitage, and of the vision he had had, and how the holy friar San Pelayo had again assured him of victory, their hearts were lifted up, and they rejoiced to serve under a leader who had such excellent counsellors in war.

In the evening preceding the battle Don Fernan Gonzalez divided his forces as he had been ordered. The first division was composed of two hundred horsemen and six thousand infantry; hardy mountaineers, light of foot and of great valor. In the advance were Don Gustios Gonzalez of Salas, and his seven sons and two nephews, and his brother Ruy Velasquez, and a valiant cavalier named Gonzalo Dias.

The second division was led by Don Lope de Biscaya, with the people of Burueba and Trevino, and Old Castile and Castro and the Asturias. Two hundred horsemen and six thousand infantry.

The third division was led by the count himself, and with him went Ruy Cavia, and Nuño Cavia and the Velascos, whom the count that day dubbed knights, and twenty esquires of the count, whom he had likewise knighted. His division consisted of four hundred and fifty horse and fifteen hundred foot; and he told his men that if they should not conquer the Moors on the following day, they should draw

off from the battle when he gave the word. Late at night, when all the camp, excepting the sentinels and guards, were buried in sleep, a light suddenly illumed the heavens, and a great serpent was seen in the air, wounded and covered with blood, and vomiting flames, and making a loud hissing that awakened all the soldiers. They rushed out of their tents, and ran hither and thither, running against each other in their affright. Count Fernan Gonzalez was awakened by their outcries, but before he came forth the serpent had disappeared. He rebuked the terrors of his people, representing to them that the Moors were great necromancers, and by their arts could raise devils to their aid; and that some Moorish astrologer had doubtless raised this spectrum to alarm them; but he bade them to be of good heart, since they had San Iago on their side, and might set Moor, astrologer, and devil at defiance.

In the first day's fight Don Fernan fought hand to hand with a powerful Moor, who had desired to try his prowess with him. It was an obstinate contest, in which the Moor was slain; but the count was so badly wounded that he fell to the earth, and had not his men surrounded and defended him, he would have been slain or captured. The battle lasted all day long, and Gustios Gonzalez and his kindred

warriors showed prodigies of valor. Don Fernan, having had his wounds stanched, remounted his horse and galloped about, giving courage to his men ; but he was covered with dust and blood, and so hoarse that he could no longer be heard. The sun went down, the Moors kept on fighting, confiding in their great numbers. The count, seeing the night approaching, ordered the trumpets to be sounded, and, collecting his troops, made one general charge on the Moors, and drove them from the field. He then drew off his men to their tents, where the weary troops found refreshment and repose, though they slept all night upon their arms.

On the second day the count rose before the dawn, and having attended mass like a good Christian, attended next to his horses, like a good cavalier, seeing with his own eyes that they were well fed and groomed, and prepared for the field. The battle this day was obstinate as the day before, with great valor and loss on either side.

On the third day the count led forth his forces at an early hour, raising his silver standard of the cross, and praying devoutly for aid. Then lowering their lances, the Castilians shouted "San Iago ! San Iago !" and rushed to the attack.

Don Gustios Gonzalo de Salas, the leader of one of the divisions made a lane into the centre of the Moorish host, dealing death on either side. He was met by a Moorish cavalier of powerful frame. Covering themselves with their shields, they attacked each other with great fury; but the days of Gustios Gonzalo were numbered, and the Moor slew him, and with him fell a nephew of Count Fernan, and many of his principal cavaliers.

Count Fernan Gonzalez encountered the Moor who had just slain his friend. The infidel would have avoided him, having heard that never man escaped alive from a conflict with him; but the count gave him a furious thrust with his lance, which stretched him dead upon the field.

The Moors, however, continued to press the count sorely, and their numbers threatened to overwhelm him. Then he put up a prayer for the aid promised in his vision, and of a sudden the Apostle San Iago appeared, with a great and shining company of angels in white, bearing the device of a red cross, and all rushing upon the Moors. The Moors were dismayed at the sight of this reinforcement to the enemy. The Christians, on the other hand, recovered their forces, knowing the Apostle San Iago to be at hand. They charged the Moors with new

vigor, and put them to flight, and pursued them for two days, killing and making captive. They then returned and gathered together the bodies of the Christians who had been slain, and buried them in the chapel of San Pedro of Arlanza and in other hermitages. The bodies of the Moors were piled up and covered with earth, forming a mound which is still to be seen on the field of battle.

Some have ascribed to the signal worn in this battle by the celestial warriors the origin of the Cross of Calatrava.

Chapter IV.

The Count Imprisoned by the King of Leon—The Countess Concerts his Escape—Leon and Castile United by the Marriage of the Prince Ordoño with Urraca, the Daughter of the Count by his First Wife.

NOT long after this most renowned and marvellous battle, a Moorish captain named Aceyfa became a vassal of the Count Don Fernan. Under his protection, and that of a rich and powerful Castilian cavalier named Diego Muñon, he rebuilt Salamanca and Ledesma, and several places on the river Tormes, which had been desolated and deserted in times past.

Ramiro the Second, who was at this time King of Leon, was alarmed at seeing a strong line of Moorish fortresses erected along the borders of his territories, and took the field with an army to drive the Moor Aceyfa from the land. The proud spirit of Count Fernan

Gonzalez was aroused at this attack upon his Moorish vassal, which he considered an indignity offered to himself; so being seconded by Don Diego Muñon, he marched forth with his chivalry to protect the Moor. In the present instance he had trusted to his own head, and had neglected to seek advice of saint or hermit; so his army was defeated by King Ramiro, and himself and Don Diego Muñon taken prisoners. The latter was sent in chains to the castle of Gordon; but the count was carried to Leon, where he was confined in a tower of the wall, which to this day is pointed out as his prison.*

All Castile was thrown into grief and consternation by this event, and lamentations were heard throughout the land, as though the count had been dead. The countess, however, did not waste time in idle tears, for she was a lady of most valiant spirit. She forthwith assembled five hundred cavaliers, chosen men of tried loyalty and devotion to the count. They met in the chapel of the palace, and took an oath

* In the *Cronica General de España*, this imprisonment is said to have been by King Sancho the Fat; but the cautious Agapida goes according to his favorite Sandoval in attributing it to King Ramiro, and in so doing he is supported by the *Chronicle* of Bleda, l. 3, c. 19.

upon the Holy Evangelists to follow the countess through all difficulties and dangers, and to obey implicitly all her commands for the rescue of their lord. With this band the countess departed secretly at nightfall, and travelled rapidly until morning, when they left the roads, and took to the mountains, lest their march should be discovered. Arrived near to Leon, she halted her band in a thick wood in the mountain of Samosa, where she ordered them to remain in secrecy. Then clothing herself as a pilgrim, with her staff and pannier, she sent word to King Ramiro that she was on a pilgrimage to San Iago, and entreated that she might have permission to visit her husband in his prison. King Ramiro not merely granted her request, but sallied forth above a league from the city with a great retinue to do her honor. So the countess entered a second time the prison where the count lay in chains, and stood before him as his protecting angel. At sight of him in this miserable and dishonored state, however, the valor of spirit which had hitherto sustained her gave way, and tears flowed from her eyes. The count received her joyfully, and reproached her with her tears; "for it becomes us," said he, "to submit to what is imposed upon us by God."

The countess now sent to entreat the king

that while she remained with the count his chains should be taken off. The king again granted her request; and the count was freed from his irons, and an excellent bed prepared in his prison.

The countess remained with him all night and concerted his escape. Before it was daylight she gave him her pilgrim's dress and staff, and the count went forth from his chamber disguised as his wife. The porter at the outer portal, thinking it to be the countess, would have waited for orders from the king; but the count, in a feigned voice, entreated not to be detained, lest he should not be able to perform his pilgrimage. The porter, mistrusting no deceit, opened the door. The count issued forth, repaired to a place pointed out by the countess, where two cavaliers awaited him with a fleet horse. They all sallied quietly forth from the city at the opening of the gates, until they found themselves clear of the walls, when they put spurs to their horses and made their way to the mountain of Samosa. Here the count was received with shouts of joy by the cavaliers whom the countess had left there in concealment.

As the day advanced the keeper of the prison entered the apartment of Don Fernan, but was astonished to find there the beautiful countess

in place of her warrior husband. He conducted her before the king, accusing her of the fraud by which she had effected the escape of the count. King Ramiro was greatly incensed, and he demanded of the countess how she dared to do such an act. "I dared," replied she, "because I saw my husband in misery, and felt it my duty to relieve him; and I dared because I was the daughter of a king, and the wife of a distinguished cavalier; as such I trust to your chivalry to treat me."

The king was charmed with her intrepidity. "Señora," said he, "you have acted well and like a noble lady, and it will redound to your laud and honor." So he commanded that she should be conducted to her husband in a manner befitting a lady of high and noble rank; and the count was overjoyed to receive her in safety, and they returned to their dominions and entered Burgos at the head of their cavaliers, amidst the transports and acclamations of their people. And King Ramiro sought the amity of Count Fernan Gonzalez, and proposed that they should unite their houses by some matrimonial alliance which should serve as a bond of mutual security. The count gladly listened to his proposals. He had a fair daughter named Urraca, by his first wife, who was now arrived at a marriageable age;

so it was agreed that nuptials should be solemnized between her and the Prince Ordoño, son of King Ramiro; and all Leon and Castile rejoiced at this union, which promised tranquillity to the land.

Chapter XVI.

Moorish Incursion into Castile—Battle of San Estevan —Of Pascual Vivas and the Miracle that Befell him —Death of Ordoño III.

FOR several succeeding years of the career of this most redoubtable cavalier, the most edifying and praiseworthy traces which remain, says Fray Antonio Agapida, are to be found in the archives of various monasteries, consisting of memorials of pious gifts and endowments made by himself and his countess, Doña Sancha.

In the process of time King Ramiro died, and was succeeded by his son Ordoño III., the same who had married Urraca, the daughter of Count Fernan. He was surnamed the Fierce, either from his savage temper or savage aspect. He had a step-brother named Don Sancho, nephew, by the mother's side, of King Garcia of Navarre, surnamed the Trembler. This Don Sancho rose in arms against Ordoño

at the very outset of his reign, seeking to deprive him of his crown. He applied for assistance to his uncle Garcia and to Count Fernan Gonzalez, and it is said both favored his pretensions. Nay, the count appeared in the field in company with King Garcia the Trembler, in support of Prince Sancho. It may seem strange that he should take up arms against his own son-in-law; and so it certainly appeared to Ordoño III., for he was so incensed against the count that he repudiated his wife Urraca and sent her back to her father, telling him that since he would not acknowledge him as king, he should not have him for son-in-law.

The kingdom now became a prey to civil wars; the restless part of the subjects of King Ordoño rose in rebellion, and everything was in confusion. King Ordoño succeeded, however, in quelling the rebellion, and defended himself so ably against King Garcia and Count Fernan Gonzalez, that they returned home without effecting their object.

About this time, say the records of Compostello, the sinful dissensions of the Christians brought on them a visible and awful scourge from Heaven. A great flame, or, as it were, a cloud of fire, passed throughout the land, burning towns, destroying men and beasts, and spreading horror and devastation even over

the sea. It passed over Zamora, consuming a great part of the place; it scorched Castro Xerez likewise, and Brebiesco and Pan Corvo in its progress, and in Burgos one hundred houses were consumed.

"These," said the worthy Agapida, "were fiery tokens of the displeasure of Heaven at the sinful conduct of the Christians in warring upon each other, instead of joining their arms like brethren in the righteous endeavor to extirpate the vile sect of Mahomet."

While the Christians were thus fighting among themselves, the Moors, taking advantage of their discord, came with a great army, and made an incursion into Castile as far as Burgos. King Ordoño and Count Fernan Gonzalez, alarmed at the common danger, came to a reconciliation, and took arms together against the Moors; though it does not appear that the king received again his repudiated wife Urraca. These confederate princes gave the Moors a great battle near to San Estevan. "This battle," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "is chiefly memorable for a miracle which occurred there," and which is recorded by the good friar with an unction and perfect credence worthy of a monkish chronicler.

The Christians were incastellated at San Estevan de Gormaz, which is near the banks

of the Douro. The Moors had possession of the fortress of Gormaz, about a league farther up the river on a lofty and rocky height.

The battle commenced at the dawn of day. Count Fernan Gonzalez, however, before taking the field, repaired with his principal cavaliers to the church, to attend the first morning's mass. Now, at this time, there was in the service of the count a brave cavalier named Pascual Vivas, who was as pious as he was brave, and would pray with as much fervor and obstinacy as he would fight. This cavalier made it a religious rule with himself, or rather had made a solemn vow, that, whenever he entered a church in the morning, he would on no account leave it until all the masses were finished.

On the present occasion the firmness of this brave but pious cavalier was put to a severe proof. When the first mass was finished, the count and his cavaliers rose and sallied from the church in clanking armor, and soon after the sound of trumpet and quick tramp of steed told that they were off to the encounter. Pascual Vivas, however, remained kneeling all in armor before the altar, waiting, according to custom, until all the masses should be finished. The masses that morning were numerous, and hour after hour passed away; yet still the

cavalier remained kneeling all in armor, with weapon in hand, yet so zealous in his devotion that he never turned his head.

All this while the esquire of the cavalier was at the door of the church, holding his war-horse, and the esquire beheld with surprise the count and his warriors depart, while his lord remained in the chapel ; and, from the height on which the chapel stood, he could see the Christian host encounter the Moors at the ford of the river, and could hear the distant sound of trumpets and din of battle ; and at the sound the war-horse pricked his ears and snuffed the air and pawed the earth, and showed all the eagerness of a noble steed to be among the armed men, but still Pascual Vivas came not out of the chapel. The esquire was wroth, and blushed for his lord, for he thought it was through cowardice and not piety that he remained in the chapel while his comrades were fighting in the field.

At length the masses were finished, and Pascual Vivas was about to sally forth when horsemen came riding up the hill with shouts of victory, for the battle was over and the Moors completely vanquished.

When Pascual Vivas heard this he was so troubled in mind that he dared not leave the chapel nor come into the presence of the count,

for he said to himself: "Surely I shall be looked upon as a recreant knight, who have hidden myself in the hour of danger." Shortly, however, came some of his fellow-cavaliers, summoning him to the presence of the count; and as he went with a beating heart, they lauded him for the valor he had displayed and the great services he had rendered, saying that to the prowess of his arm they owed the victory. The good knight, imagining they were scoffing at him, felt still more cast down in spirit, and entered the presence of the count covered with confusion. Here again he was received with praises and caresses, at which he was greatly astonished, but still thought it all done in mockery. When the truth came to be known, however, all present were filled with wonder, for it appeared as if this cavalier had been, at the same moment, in the chapel and in the field; for while he remained on his knees before the altar, with his steed pawing the earth at the door, a warrior exactly resembling him, with the same arms, device, and steed, had appeared in the hottest of the fight, penetrating and overthrowing whole squadrons of Moors; that he had cut his way to the standard of the enemy, killed the standard-bearer, and carried off the banner in triumph; that his pourpoint and coat-of-mail

were cut to pieces, and his horse covered with wounds; yet still he fought on, and through his valor chiefly the victory was obtained.

What more moved astonishment was that for every wound received by the warrior and his steed in the field, there appeared marks on the pourpoint and coat of mail and upon the steed of Pascual Vivas, so that he had the semblance of having been in the severest press of the battle.

The matter was now readily explained by the worthy friars who followed the armies in those days, and who were skilful in expounding the miracles daily occurring in those holy wars. A miraculous intervention had been vouchsafed to Pascual Vivas. That his piety in remaining at his prayers might not put him to shame before sinful men, an angel bearing his form and semblance had taken his place in battle and fought while he prayed.

The matter being thus explained, all present were filled with pious admiration, and Pascual Vivas, if he ceased to be extolled as a warrior. came near being canonized as a saint.*

* Exactly the same kind of miracle is recorded as happening in the same place to a cavalier of the name of Don Fernan Antolenez, in the service of the Count Garcia Fernandez. Fray Antonio Agapida has no doubt that the same miracle did actually happen to

King Ordoño III. did not long survive this battle. Scarce had he arrived at Zamora on his way homeward, when he was seized with a mortal malady of which he died. He was succeeded by his brother Don Sancho, the same who had formerly endeavored to dispossess him of his throne.

both cavaliers; "for in those days," says he, "there was such a demand for miracles that the same had frequently to be repeated" witness the repeated appearance of Santiago in precisely the same manner, to save Christian armies from imminent danger of defeat, and achieve wonderful victories over the infidels, as we find recorded throughout the Spanish chronicles.

Chapter XVII.

King Sancho the Fat—Of the Homage he Exacted from Count Fernan Gonzalez, and of the Strange Bargain that he Made with him for the Purchase of his Horse and Falcon.

KING SANCHO I., on ascending the throne, held a *cortes* at Leon, where all the great men of the kingdom and the princes who owed allegiance to him were expected to attend and pay homage. As the court of Leon was excessively tenacious of its claim to sovereignty over Castile, the absence of Count Fernan Gonzalez was noticed with great displeasure by the king, who sent missives to him commanding his attendance. The count being proud of heart, and standing much upon the independence of Castile, was unwilling to kiss the hand of any one in token of vassalage. He was at length induced to stifle his repugnance and repair to the court, but he went in almost regal style and with a

splendid retinue, more like a sovereign making a progress through his dominions.

As he approached the city of Leon, King Sancho came forth in great state to receive him, and they met apparently as friends, but there was enmity against each other in their hearts.

The rich and gallant array with which Count Fernan made his entry into Leon was the theme of every tongue; but nothing attracted more notice than a falcon, thoroughly trained, which he carried on his hand and an Arabian horse, of wonderful beauty, which he had gained in his wars with the Moors. King Sancho was seized with a vehement desire to possess this horse and falcon, and offered to purchase them of the count. Don Fernan haughtily declined to enter into traffic; but offered them to the monarch as a gift. The king was equally punctilious in refusing to accept a favor; but as monarchs do not easily forego anything on which they have set their hearts, it became evident to Count Fernan that it was necessary, for the sake of peace, to part with his horse and falcon. To save his dignity, however, he asked a price corresponding to his rank; for it was beneath a cavalier, he said, to sell his things cheap, like a mean man. He demanded, therefore, one thousand marks of silver for the horse and falcon,—to be paid on a

stipulated day; if not paid on that day the price to be doubled on the next, and on each day's further delay the price should in like manner be doubled. To these terms the king gladly consented, and the terms were specified in a written agreement, which was duly signed and witnessed. The king thus gained the horse and falcon, but it will be hereinafter shown that this indulgence of his fancy cost him dear.

This eager desire for an Arabian steed appears the more singular in Sancho the First, from his being so corpulent that he could not sit on horseback. Hence he is commonly known in history by the appellation of King Sancho the Fat. His unwieldy bulk, also, may be one reason why he soon lost the favor of his warrior subjects, who looked upon him as a mere trencherman and bed-presser, and not fitted to command men who lived in the saddle, and had rather fight than either eat or sleep.

King Sancho saw that he might soon have hard fighting to maintain his throne; and how could he figure as a warrior who could not mount on horseback? In his anxiety he repaired to his uncle, Garcia, King of Navarre, surnamed the Trembler, who was an exceeding meagre man, and asked counsel of him

what he should do to cure himself of this troublesome corpulency. Garcia the Trembler was totally at a loss for a recipe, his own leanness being a gift of Nature; he advised him, however, to repair to Abderahman, the Miramamolin of Spain and King of Cordova, with whom he was happily at peace, and consult with him, and seek advice of the Arabian physicians resident at Cordova—the Moors being generally a spare and active people, and the Arabian physicians skilful above all others in the treatment of diseases.

King Sancho the Fat, therefore, sent amicable messages beforehand to the Moorish Miramamolin, and followed them as fast as his corpulency would permit; and he was well received by the Moorish sovereign, and remained for a long time at Cordova, diligently employed in decreasing his rotundity.

While the corpulent king was thus growing leaner, discontent broke out among his subjects at home; and Count Fernan Gonzalez, taking advantage of it, stirred up an insurrection, and placed upon the throne of Leon Ordoño IV., surnamed the Bad, who was a kinsman of the late King Ordoño III., and he moreover gave him his daughter for wife—his daughter Urraca, the repudiated wife of the late king.

If the good Count Fernan Gonzalez supposed he had fortified himself by this alliance, and that his daughter was now fixed for the second time, and more firmly than ever, on the throne of Leon, he was grievously deceived; for Sancho I. returned from Cordova at the head of a powerful host of Moors, and was no longer to be called the Fat, for he had so well succeeded under the regimen prescribed by the Miramamolin and his Arabian physicians, that he could vault into the saddle with merely putting his hand upon the pommel.

Ordoño IV. was a man of puny heart; no sooner did he hear of the approach of King Sancho, and of his marvellous leanness and agility, than he was seized with terror, and, abandoning his throne and his twice-repudiated spouse Urraca, he made for the mountains of Asturias, or, as others assert, was overtaken by the Moors and killed with lances.

Chapter XVIII.

Further of the Horse and Falcon.

KING SANCHO I., having re-established himself on the throne, and recovered the good-will of his subjects by his leanness and horsemanship, sent a stern message to Count Fernan Gonzalez to come to his *cortes* or resign his countship. The count was exceedingly indignant at this order, and feared, moreover, that some indignity or injury would be offered him should he repair to Leon. He made the message known to his principal cavaliers, and requested their advice. Most of them were of opinion that he should not go to the *cortes*. Don Fernan declared, however, that he would not act disloyally in omitting to do that which the counts of Castile had always performed, although he felt that he incurred the risk of death or imprisonment. Leaving his son, Garcia Fernandez, therefore, in charge

of his counsellors, he departed for Leon with only seven cavaliers.

As he approached the gates of that city, no one came forth to greet him, as had always been the custom. This he considered an evil sign. Presenting himself before the king, he would have kissed his hand, but the monarch withheld it. He charged the count with being vainglorious and disloyal; with having absented himself from the *cortes* and conspired against his throne;—for all which he should make atonement, and should give hostages or pledges for his good faith before he left the court.

The count in reply accounted for absenting himself from the *cortes* by the perfidious treatment he had formerly experienced at Leon. As to any grievances the king might have to complain of, he stood ready to redress them, provided the king would make good his own written engagement, signed with his own hand and sealed with his own seal, to pay for the horse and falcon which he had purchased of the count on his former visit to Leon. Three years had now elapsed since the day appointed for the payment, and in the meantime the price had gone on daily doubling, according to stipulation. They parted mutually indignant; and, after the count had retired to his quarters,

the king, piqued to maintain his royal word, summoned his major-domo, and ordered him to take a large amount of treasure and carry it to the Count of Castile in payment of his demand. So the major-domo repaired to the count with a great sack of money to settle with him for the horse and hawk; but when he came to cast up the account, and double it each day that intervened since the appointed day of payment, the major-domo, though an expert man at figures, was totally confounded, and, returning to the king, assured him that all the money in the world would not suffice to pay the debt. King Sancho was totally at a loss how to keep his word, and pay off a debt which was more than enough to ruin him. Grievously did he repent his first experience in traffic, and found that it is not safe even for a monarch to trade in horses.

In the meantime the count was suffered to return to Castile; but he did not let the matter rest here; for, being sorely incensed at the indignities he had experienced, he sent missives to King Sancho, urging his demand of payment for the horse and falcon—menacing otherwise to make seizures by way of indemnification. Receiving no satisfactory reply, he made a foray into the kingdom of Leon, and brought off great spoil of sheep and cattle.

King Sancho now saw that the count was too bold and urgent a creditor to be trifled with. In his perplexity he assembled the estates of his kingdom, and consulted them upon this momentous affair. His counsellors, like himself, were grievously perplexed between the sanctity of the royal word and the enormity of the debt. After much deliberation they suggested a compromise—the Count Fernan Gonzalez to relinquish the debt, and in lieu thereof to be released from his vassalage.

The count agreed right gladly to this compromise, being thus relieved from all tribute and imposition, and from the necessity of kissing the hand of any man in the world as his sovereign. Thus did King Sancho pay with the sovereignty of Castile for a horse and falcon, and thus were the Castilians relieved, by a skilful bargain in horse-dealing, from all subjection to the kingdom of Leon.*

* *Cronica de Alonso el Sabio*, pt. 3, c. 19.

Chapter XIX.

The Last Campaign of Count Fernan—His Death.

THE good Count Fernan Gonzalez was now well stricken in years. The fire of youth was extinct, the pride and ambition of manhood were over; instead of erecting palaces and lofty castles, he began now to turn his thoughts upon the grave and to build his last earthly habitation, the sepulchre.

Before erecting his own, he had one built of rich and stately workmanship for his first wife, the object of his early love, and her remains conveyed to it and interred with great solemnity. His own sepulchre, according to ancient promise, was prepared at the chapel and hermitage of San Pedro at Arlanza, where he had first communed with the holy Friar Pelayo. When it was completed, he merely inscribed upon it the word "Obijt," leaving the rest to be supplied by others after his death.

When the Moors perceived that Count Fernan Gonzalez, once so redoubtable in arms, was old and infirm, and given to build tombs instead of castles, they thought it a favorable time to make an inroad into Castile. They passed the border, therefore, in great numbers, laying everything waste and bearding the old lion in his very den.

The veteran had laid by sword and buckler, and had almost given up the world; but the sound of Moorish drum and trumpet called him back even from the threshold of the sepulchre. Buckling on once more his armor and bestriding his war-steed, he summoned around him his Castilian cavaliers, seasoned like him in a thousand battles, and accompanied by his son Garcia Fernandez, who inherited all the valor of his father, issued forth to meet the foe, followed by the shouts and blessings of the populace, who enjoyed to see him once more in arms and glowing with his ancient fire.

The Moors were retiring from an extensive ravage, laden with booty and driving before them an immense *cavalgada*, when they descried a squadron of cavaliers, armed all in steel, emerging from a great cloud of dust, and bearing aloft the silver cross, the well-known standard of Count Fernan Gonzalez.

That veteran warrior came on, as usual, leading the way, sword in hand. The very sight of his standard had struck dismay into the enemy; but they soon gave way before one of his vigorous charges, nor did he cease to pursue them until they took shelter within the very walls of Cordova. Here he wasted the surrounding country with fire and sword, and after thus braving the Moor in his very capital, returned triumphant to Burgos.

"Such," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "was the last campaign in this life of this most valorous cavalier"; and now, abandoning all further deeds of mortal enterprise in arms to his son Garcia Fernandez, he addressed all his thoughts, as he said, to prepare for his campaign in the skies. He still talked as a veteran warrior, whose whole life had been passed in arms, but his talk was not of earthly warfare nor of earthly kingdoms. He spoke only of the kingdom of heaven, and what he must do to make a successful inroad and gain an eternal inheritance in that blessed country.

He was equally indefatigable in preparing for his spiritual as for his mortal campaign. Instead, however, of mailed warriors tramping through his courts, and the shrill neigh of steed or clang of trumpet echoing among their walls, there were seen holy priests and bare-

foot monks passing to and fro, and the halls resounded with the sacred melody of litany and psalm. So pleased was Heaven with the good works of this pious cavalier, and especially with rich donations to churches and monasteries which he made under the guidance of his spiritual counsellors, that we are told it was given to him to foresee in vision the day and hour when he should pass from this weary life and enter the mansions of eternal rest.

Knowing that the time approached, he prepared for his end like a good Christian. He wrote to the kings of Leon and Navarre in terms of great humility, craving their pardon for all past injuries and offenses, and entreating them, for the good of Christendom, to live in peace and amity, and make common cause for the defense of the faith.

Ten days before the time which Heaven had appointed for his death he sent for the abbot of the chapel and convent of Arlanza, and bending his aged knees before him, confessed all his sins. This done, as in former times he had shown great state and ceremony in his worldly pageants, so now he arranged his last *cavalgada* to the grave. He prayed the abbot to return to his monastery and have his sepulchre prepared for his reception, and that the

abbots of St. Sebastian and Silos and Quirce, with a train of holy friars, might come at the appointed day for his body; that thus, as he commended his soul to Heaven through the hands of his confessor, he might, through the hands of these pious men, resign his body to the earth.

When the abbot had departed, the count desired to be left alone; and clothing himself in a coarse friar's garb, he remained in fervent prayer for the forgiveness of his sins. As he had been a valiant captain all his life against the enemies of the faith, so was he in death against the enemies of the soul. He died in the full command of all his faculties, making no groans nor contortions, but rendering up his spirit with the calmness of an heroic cavalier.

We are told that when he died voices were heard from heaven in testimony of his sanctity, while the tears and lamentations of all Spain proved how much he was valued and beloved on earth. His remains were conveyed, according to his request, to the monastery of St. Pedro de Arlanza by a procession of holy friars with solemn chant and dirge. In the church of that convent they still repose; and two paintings are to be seen in the convent,—one representing the count valiantly fighting with the

Moors, the other conversing with St. Pelayo and St. Millan, as they appeared to him in vision before the battle of Hazinas.

The cross which he used as his standard is still treasured up in the sacristy of the convent. It is of massive silver, two ells in length, with our Saviour sculptured upon it, and above the head, in Gothic letters, I. N. R. I. Below is Adam awaking from the grave, with the words of St. Paul: "Awake, thou who sleepest, and arise from the tomb, for Christ shall give thee life."

This holy cross still has the form at the lower end by which the standard-bearer rested it in the pommel of his saddle.

"Inestimable," adds Fray Antonio Agapida, "are the relics and remains of saints and sainted warriors." In after times, when Fernando the Third, surnamed the Saint, went to the conquest of Seville, he took with him a bone of this thrice-blessed and utterly renowned cavalier, together with his sword and pennon, hoping through their efficacy to succeed in his enterprise,—nor was he disappointed; but what is marvellous to hear, but which we have on the authority of the good Bishop Sandoval, on the day on which King Fernando the Saint entered Seville in triumph, great blows were heard to resound within the

sepulchre of the count at Arlanza, as if veritably his bones which remained behind exulted in the victory gained by those which had been carried to the wars. Thus were marvellously fulfilled the words of the holy psalm,— "Exaltabant ossa humilitata."*

Here ends the chronicle of the most valorous and renowned Don Fernan Gonzalez, Count of Castile. *Laus Deo.*

* Sandoval, p. 334.

CHRONICLE OF FERNANDO THE SAINT.

CHRONICLE OF FERNANDO THE SAINT.

Chapter 1.

The Parentage of Fernando—Queen Berenguela—The Laras—Don Alvar Conceals the Death of King Henry—Mission of Queen Berenguela to Alfonso IX.—She Renounces the Crown of Castile in Favor of her son Fernando.

FERNANDO III., surnamed the Saint, was the son of Alfonso III. King of Leon, and of Berenguela, a princess of Castile; but there were some particulars concerning his parentage which it is necessary clearly to state before entering upon his personal history.

Alfonso III. of Leon, and Alfonso IX. King of Castile, were cousins, but there were dissensions between them. The King of Leon, to strengthen himself, married his cousin, the

Princess Theresa, daughter of his uncle, the King of Portugal. By her he had two daughters. The marriage was annulled by Pope Celestine III. on account of their consanguinity, and, on their making resistance, they were excommunicated and the kingdom laid under an interdict. This produced an unwilling separation in 1195. Alfonso III. did not long remain single. Fresh dissensions having broken out between him and his cousin Alfonso IX. of Castile, they were amicably adjusted by his marrying the Princess Berenguela, daughter of that monarch. This second marriage, which took place about three years after the divorce, came likewise under the ban of the Church, and for the same reason, the near propinquity of the parties. Again the commands of the Pope were resisted, and again the refractory parties were excommunicated and the kingdom laid under an interdict.

The unfortunate King of Leon was the more unwilling to give up the present marriage, as the Queen Berenguela had made him the happy father of several children, one of whom he hoped might one day inherit the two crowns of Leon and Castile.

The intercession and entreaties of the bishops of Castile so far mollified the rigor of the Pope,

that a compromise was made; the legitimacy of the children by the present marriage was not to be affected by the divorce of the parents, and Fernando, the eldest, the subject of the present chronicle, was recognized as successor to his father to the throne of Leon. The divorced Queen Berenguela left Fernando in Leon, and returned in 1204 to Castile, to the court of her father, Alfonso III. Here she remained until the death of her father in 1214, who was succeeded by his son Enrique, or Henry I. The latter being only in his eleventh year, his sister, the ex-Queen Berenguela, was declared regent. She well merited the trust, for she was a woman of great prudence and wisdom, and a resolute and magnanimous spirit.

At this time the house of Lara had risen to great power. There were three brothers of that turbulent and haughty race, Don Alvar Nuñez, Don Fernan Nuñez, and Don Gonzalo Nuñez. The Laras had caused great trouble in the kingdom during the minority of Prince Henry's father, by arrogating to themselves the regency; and they attempted, in like manner, to get the guardianship of the son, declaring it an office too important and difficult to be intrusted to a woman. Having a powerful and unprincipled party among the nobles,

and using great bribery among persons in whom Berenguela confided, they carried their point; and the virtuous Berenguela, to prevent civil commotions, resigned the regency into the hands of Don Alvar Nuñez de Lara, the head of that ambitious house. First, however, she made him kneel and swear that he would conduct himself toward the youthful King Enrique as a thorough friend and a loyal vassal, guarding his person from all harm; that he would respect the property of individuals, and undertake nothing of importance without the counsel and consent of Queen Berenguela. Furthermore, that he would guard and respect the hereditary possessions of Queen Berenguela, left to her by her father, and would always serve her as his sovereign, the daughter of his deceased king. All this Don Alvar Nuñez solemnly swore upon the sacred evangelists and the holy cross.

No sooner, however, had he got the young king in his power, than he showed the ambition, rapacity, and arrogance of his nature. He prevailed upon the young king to make him a count; he induced him to hold *cortes* without the presence of Queen Berenguela; issuing edicts in the king's name, he banished refractory nobles, giving their offices and lands to his brothers; he levied exactions on rich

and poor, and, what is still more flagrant, he extended these exactions to the Church. In vain did Queen Berenguela remonstrate; in vain did the Dean of Toledo thunder forth an excommunication; he scoffed at them both, for in the king's name he persuaded himself he had a tower of strength. He even sent a letter to Queen Berenguela in the name of the young king, demanding of her the castles, towns, and ports which had been left to her by her father. The queen was deeply grieved at this letter, and sent a reply to the king that, when she saw him face to face, she would do with those possessions whatever he should command, as her brother and sovereign.

On receiving this message, the young king was shocked and distressed that such a demand should have been made in his name; but he was young and inexperienced, and could not openly contend with a man of Don Alvar's overbearing character. He wrote secretly to the queen, however, assuring her that the demand had been made without his knowledge, and saying how gladly he would come to her if he could, and be relieved from the thraldom of Don Alvar.

In this way the unfortunate prince was made an instrument in the hands of this haughty and arrogant nobleman of inflicting all kinds

of wrongs and injuries upon his subjects. Don Alvar constantly kept him with him, carrying him from place to place of his dominions, wherever his presence was necessary to effect some new measure of tyranny. He even endeavored to negotiate a marriage between the young king and some neighboring princess, in order to retain an influence over him, but in this he was unsuccessful.

For three years had he maintained this iniquitous sway, until one day in 1217, when the young king was with him at Palencia, and was playing with some youthful companions in the court-yard of the episcopal palace, a tile, either falling from the roof of a tower, or sportively thrown by one of his companions, struck him in the head, and inflicted a wound of which he presently died.

This was a fatal blow to the power of Don Alvar. To secure himself from any sudden revulsion in the popular mind, he determined to conceal the death of the king as long as possible, and gave out that he had retired to the fortress of Tariego, whither he had the body conveyed, as if still living. He continued to issue despatches from time to time in the name of the king, and made various excuses for his non-appearance in public.

Queen Berenguela soon learned the truth.

According to the laws of Castile she was heiress to the crown, but she resolved to transfer it to her son Fernando, who, being likewise acknowledged successor to the crown of Leon, would unite the two kingdoms under his rule. To effect her purpose she availed herself of the cunning of her enemy, kept secret her knowledge of the death of her brother, and sent two of her confidential cavaliers, Don Lope Diaz de Haro, Señor of Biscay, and Don Gonzalo Ruiz Giron, and Don Alonzo Tellez de Meneses, to her late husband, Alfonso IX., King of Leon, who, with her son Fernando, was then at Toro, entreating him to send the latter to her to protect her from the tyranny of Don Alvar. The prudent mother, however, forebore to let King Alfonso know of her brother's death, lest it awaken in him ambitious thoughts about the Castilian crown.

This mission being sent, she departed with the cavaliers of her party for Palencia. The death of the King Enrique being noised about, she was honored as Queen of Castile, and Don Tello, the bishop, came forth in procession to receive her. The next day she proceeded to the castle of Duenas, and, on its making some show of resistance, took it by force.

The cavaliers who were with the queen endeavored to effect a reconciliation between her

and Don Alvar, seeing the latter had powerful connections, and through his partisans and retainers held possession of the principal towns and fortresses; that haughty nobleman, however, would listen to no proposals unless the Prince Fernando was given into his guardianship, as had been the Prince Enrique.

In the meantime the request of Queen Berenguela had been granted by her late husband, the King of Leon, and her son Fernando hastened to meet her. The meeting took place at the castle of Otiella, and happy was the anxious mother once more to embrace her son. At her command the cavaliers in her train elevated him on the trunk of an elm-tree for a throne, and hailed him king with great acclamations.

They now proceeded to Valladolid, which at that time was a great and wealthy town. Here the nobility and chivalry of Estremadura and other parts hastened to pay homage to the queen. A stage was erected in the market-place, where the assembled states acknowledged her for queen and swore fealty to her. She immediately, in presence of her nobles, prelates, and people, renounced the crown in favor of her son. The air rang with the shouts of "Long live Fernando, King of Castile!" The bishops and clergy then conducted the king in state to the church. This was on the

Portico of the College of S. Gregorio — Valladolid.

From an engraving.

Chapter II.

King Alfonso of Leon Ravages Castile—Captivity of Don Alvar—Death of the Laras.

KING ALFONSO of Leon was exceedingly exasperated at the furtive manner in which his son Fernando had left him, without informing him of King Henry's death. He considered, and perhaps with reason, the transfer of the crown of Castile by Berenguela to her son, as a manœuvre to evade any rights or claims which he, King Alfonso, might have over her, notwithstanding their divorce; and he believed that both mother and son had conspired to deceive and outwit him; and, what was especially provoking, they had succeeded. It was natural for King Alfonso to have become by this time exceedingly irritable and sensitive; he had been repeatedly thwarted in his dearest concerns; excommunicated out of two wives by the Pope, and now, as he conceived, cajoled out of a kingdom.

In his wrath he flew to arms,—a prompt and customary recourse of kings in those days when they had no will to consult but their own; and notwithstanding the earnest expostulations and entreaties of holy men, he entered Castile with an army, ravaging the legitimate inheritance of his son, as if it had been the territory of an enemy. He was seconded in his outrages by Count Alvar Nuñez de Lara and his two bellicose brothers, who hoped still to retain power by rallying under his standard.

There were at this time full two thousand cavaliers with the youthful king, resolute men, well armed and well appointed, and they urged him to lead them against the King of Leon. Queen Berenguela, however, interposed and declared her son should never be guilty of the impiety of taking up arms against his father. By her advice King Fernando sent an embassy to his father, expostulating with him, and telling him that he ought to be thankful to God that Castile was in the hands of a son disposed at all times to honor and defend him, instead of a stranger who might prove a dangerous foe.

King Alfonso, however, was not so to be appeased. By the ambassadors he sent proposals to Queen Berenguela that they reënter into wedlock, for which he would procure a

dispensation from the Pope; they would then be jointly sovereigns of both Castile and Leon, and the Prince Fernando, their son, should inherit both crowns. But the virtuous Berenguela recoiled from this proposal of a second nuptials. "God forbid," replied she, "that I should return to a sinful marriage; and as to the crown of Castile, it now belongs to my son, to whom I have given it with the sanction of God and the good men of this realm."

King Alfonso was more enraged than ever by this reply, and, being incited and aided by Count Alvar and his faction, he resumed his ravages, laying waste the country and burning the villages. He would have attacked Duenas, but found that place strongly garrisoned by Diego Lopez de Haro and Ruy Diaz de los Cameros; he next marched upon Burgos, but that place was equally well garrisoned by Lope Diez de Faro and other stout Castilian cavaliers; so perceiving his son to be more firmly seated upon the throne than he had imagined, and that all his own menaces and ravages were unavailing, he returned deeply chagrined to his kingdom.

King Fernando, in obedience to the dictates of his mother as well as of his own heart, abstained from any acts of retaliation on his father; but he turned his arms against Muñon

and Lerma and Lara, and other places which either belonged to, or held out for, Count Alvar, and, having subdued them, proceeded to Burgos, the capital of his kingdom, where he was received by the bishop and clergy with great solemnity, and whither the nobles and chivalry from all parts of Castile hastened to rally round his throne. The turbulent Count Alvar Nuñez de Lara and his brothers retaining other fortresses too strong to be easily taken, refused all allegiance, and made ravaging excursions over the country. The prudent and provident Berenguela, therefore, while at Burgos, seeing that the troubles and contentions of the kingdom would cause great expense and prevent much revenue, gathered together all her jewels of gold and silver and precious stones, and all her plate and rich silks, and other precious things, and caused them to be sold, and gave the money to her son to defray the cost of these civil wars.

King Fernando and his mother departed shortly afterwards for Palencia; on their way they had to pass by Herrera, which at that time was the stronghold of Count Alvar. When the king came in sight, Count Fernan Nuñez, with his battalions, was on the banks of the river, but drew within the walls. As the king had to pass close by with his retinue,

he ordered his troops to be put into good order, and gave it in charge to Alonzo Tellez and Suer Tellez and Alvar Ruyz to protect the flanks.

As the royal troops drew near, Count Alvar, leaving his people in the town, sallied forth with a few cavaliers to regard the army as it passed. Affecting great contempt for the youthful king and his cavaliers, he stood drawn up on a rising ground with his attendants, looking down upon the troops with scornful aspect, and rejecting all advice to retire into the town.

As the king and his immediate escort came nigh, their attention was attracted to this little body of proud warriors drawn up upon a bank and regarding them so loftily; and Alonzo Tellez and Suer Tellez looking more closely, recognized Don Alvar, and putting spurs to their horses, dashed up the bank, followed by several cavaliers. Don Alvar repented of his vain confidence too late, and seeing great numbers urging towards him, turned his reins and retreated toward the town. Still his stomach was too high for absolute flight, and the others, who spurred after him at full speed, overtook him. Throwing himself from his horse, he covered himself with his shield and prepared for defense. Alonzo Tellez, however, called to his men not to kill the count, but to

take him prisoner. He was accordingly captured, with several of his followers, and borne off to the king and queen. The count had everything to apprehend from their vengeance for his misdeeds. They used no personal harshness, however, but demanded from him that he should surrender all the castles and strong places held by the retainers and partisans of his brothers and himself, that he should furnish one hundred horsemen to aid in their recovery, and should remain a prisoner until those places were all in the possession of the crown.

Captivity broke the haughty spirit of Don Alvar. He agreed to those conditions, and until they should be fulfilled was consigned to the charge of Gonsalvo Ruyz Giron, and confined in the castle of Valladolid. The places were delivered up in the course of a few months, and thus King Fernando became strongly possessed of his kingdom.

Stripped of power, state, and possessions, Count Alvar and his brothers, after an ineffectual attempt to rouse the King of Leon to another campaign against his son, became savage and desperate, and made predatory excursions, pillaging the country, until Count Alvar fell mortally ill of hydropsy. Struck with remorse and melancholy, he repaired to

Toro and entered the chivalrous order of Santiago, that he might gain the indulgences granted by the Pope to those who die in that order, and hoping, says an ancient chronicler, to oblige God, as it were, by that religious ceremony, to pardon his sins.* His illness endured seven months, and he was reduced to such poverty that at his death there was not money enough left by him to convey his body to Ucles, where he had requested to be buried, nor to pay for tapers for his funeral. When Queen Berenguela heard this, she ordered that the funeral should be honorably performed at her own expense, and sent a cloth of gold to cover the bier.†

The brother of Count Alvar, Don Fernando, abandoned his country in despair and went to Marocco, where he was well received by the miramamolin, and had lands and revenues assigned to him. He became a great favorite among the Moors, to whom he used to recount his deeds in the civil wars of Castile. At length he fell dangerously ill, and caused himself to be taken to a suburb inhabited by Christians. There happened to be there at that time one Don Gonsalvo, a knight of the order of the

* *Cronica Gotica*, por Don Alonzo Nuñez de Castro, p. 17.

† *Cronica General de España*, pt. 3, p. 370.

Hospital of St. John de Acre, and who had been in the service of Pope Innocent III. Don Fernando, finding his end approaching, entreated of the knight his religious habit, that he might die in it. His request was granted, and thus Count Fernando died in the habit of a Knight Hospital of St. John de Acre, in Elbora, a suburb of Marocco. His body was afterwards brought to Spain, and interred in a town on the banks of the Pisuerga, in which repose likewise the remains of his wife and children.

The Count Gonsalvo Nuñez de Lara, the third of these brothers, also took refuge among the Moors. He was seized with violent disease in the city of Baeza, where he died. His body was conveyed to Campos a Zalmos, which appertained to the Friars of the Temple, where the holy fraternity gave it the rites of sepulture with all due honor. Such was the end of these three brothers of the once proud and powerful house of Lara, whose disloyal deeds had harassed their country and brought ruin upon themselves.

Chapter III.

Marriage of King Fernando—Campaign against the Moors—Aben Mohamed, King of Baeza, Declares himself the Vassal of King Fernando—They March to Jaen—Burning of the Tower—Fernando Commences the Building of the Cathedral at Toledo.

KING FERNANDO, aided by the sage counsels of his mother, reigned for some time in peace and quietness, administering his affairs with equity and justice. The good Queen Berenguela now began to cast about her eyes in search of a suitable alliance for her son, and had many consultations with the Bishop Maurice of Burgos, and other ghostly counsellors, thereupon. They at length agreed upon the Princess Beatrix, daughter of the late Philip, Emperor of Germany, and the Bishop Maurice and Padre Fray Pedro de Arlanza were sent as envoys to the Emperor Frederick II., cousin of the princess, to negotiate the terms. An arrangement was happily effected, and the princess set out

for Spain. In passing through France she was courteously entertained at Paris by King Philip, who made her rich presents. On the borders of Castile she was met at Vittoria by the Queen Berenguela, with a great train of prelates, monks, and masters of the religious orders, and of abbesses and nuns, together with a glorious train of chivalry. In this state she was conducted to Burgos, where the king and all his court came forth to receive her, and their nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and rejoicing.

King Fernando lived happily with his fair Queen Beatrix, and his kingdom remained in peace; but by degrees he became impatient of quiet, and anxious to make war upon the Moors. Perhaps he felt called upon to make some signal essay in arms at present, having, the day before his nuptials, been armed a knight in the monastery of Las Huelgos, and in those iron days knighthood was not a matter of mere parade and ceremony, but called for acts of valor and proofs of stern endurance.

The discreet Berenguela endeavored to dissuade her son from taking the field, considering him not of sufficient age. In all things else he was ever obedient to her counsels, and even to her inclinations, but it was in vain that she endeavored to persuade him from making

war upon the infidels. "God," would he say, "had put into his hands not merely a sceptre to govern, but a sword to avenge his country."

It was fortunate for the good cause, moreover, add the Spanish chroniclers, that while the queen-mother was endeavoring to throw a damper on the kindling fire of her son, a worthy prelate was at hand to stir it up into a blaze. This was the illustrious historian Rodrigo, Archbishop of Toledo, who now preached a crusade against the Moors, promising like indulgences with those granted to the warriors for the Holy Sepulchre. The consequence was a great assemblage of troops from all parts at Toledo.

King Fernando was prevented for a time from taking the field in person, but sent in advance Don Lope Diaz de Haro and Ruy Gonsalvo de Giron and Alonzo Tellez de Meneses, with five hundred cavaliers, well armed and mounted. The very sight of them effected a conquest over Aben Mohamed, the Moorish King of Baeza, insomuch that he sent an embassy to King Fernando, declaring himself his vassal.

When King Fernando afterwards took the field, he was joined by this Moorish ally at the Navas or plains of Tolosa; who was in company with him when the king marched to Jaen, to the foot of a tower, and set fire to it, where-

upon those Moors who remained in the tower were burned to death, and those who leaped from the walls were received on the points of lances.

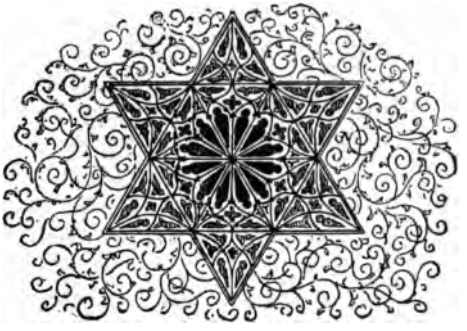
Notwithstanding the burnt-offering of this tower, Heaven did not smile upon the attempt of King Fernando to reduce the city of Jaen. He was obliged to abandon the siege, but consoled himself by laying waste the country. He was more successful elsewhere. He carried the strong town of Priego by assault, and gave the garrison their lives on condition of yielding up all their property, and paying, moreover, eighty thousand maravedis of silver. For the payment of this sum they were obliged to give as hostages fifty-five damsels of great beauty, and fifty cavaliers of rank, besides nine hundred of the common people. The king divided his hostages among his bravest cavaliers and the religious orders; but his vassal, the Moorish King of Baeza, obtained the charge of the Moorish damsels.

The king then attacked Loxa, and his men scaled the walls and burnt the gates, and made themselves masters of the place. He then led his army into the Vega of Granada, the inhabitants of which submitted to become his vassals, and gave up all the Christian captives in that city, amounting to thirteen hundred.

Aben Mohamed, king of Baeza, then delivered to King Fernando the towers of Martos and Andujar, and the king gave them to Don Alvar Perez de Castro and placed with him Don Gonzalo Ybañez, Master of Calatrava, and Tello Alonzo Meneses, son of Don Alonzo Tellez, and other stout cavaliers, fitted to maintain frontier posts. These arrangements being made, and having ransacked every mountain and valley, and taken many other places not herein specified, King Fernando returned in triumph to Toledo, where he was joyfully received by his mother Berenguela and his wife Beatrix.

Clerical historians do not fail to record with infinite satisfaction a signal instance of the devout and zealous spirit which King Fernando had derived from his constant communion with the reverend fathers of the Church. As the king was one day walking with his ghostly adviser the archbishop, in the principal church of Toledo, which was built in the Moresco fashion, having been a mosque of the infidels, it occurred, or more probably was suggested to him, that, since God had aided him to increase his kingdom, and had given him such victories over the enemies of his holy faith, it became him to rebuild his holy temple, which was ancient and falling to decay, and to adorn it richly

with the spoils taken from the Moors. The thought was promptly carried into effect. The king and the archbishop laid the first stone with great solemnity, and in the fullness of time accomplished that mighty cathedral of Toledo, which remains the wonder and admiration of after-ages.



Chapter IV.

Assassination of Aben Mohamed—His Head Carried as a Present to Abullale, the Moorish King of Seville—Advance of the Christians into Andalusia—Abullale Purchases a Truce.

THE worthy Fray Antonio Agapida records various other victories and achievements of King Fernando in a subsequent campaign against the Moors of Andalusia; in the course of which his camp was abundantly supplied with grain by his vassal Aben Mohamed, the Moorish King of Baeza. The assistance rendered by that Moslem monarch to the Christian forces in their battles against those of his own race and his own faith, did not meet with the reward it merited. "Doubtless," says Antonio Agapida, "because he halted half way in the right path, and did not turn thorough renegado." It appears that his friendship for the Christians gave great disgust to his subjects, and some of

them rose upon him, while he was sojourning in the city of Cordova, and sought to destroy him. Aben Mohamed fled by a gate leading to the gardens, to take shelter in the tower of Almodovar; but the assassins overtook him, and slew him on a hill near the tower. They then cut off his head and carried it as a present to Abullale, the Moorish king of Seville, expecting to be munificently rewarded; but that monarch gave command that their heads should be struck off and their bodies thrown to the dogs, as traitors to their liege lords.*

King Fernando was grieved when he heard of the assassination of his vassal, and feared the death of Aben Mohamed might lead to a rising of the Moors. He sent notice to Andujar, to Don Alvar Perez de Castro and Alonzo Tellez de Meneses, to be on their guard; but the Moors, fearing punishment for some rebellious movements, abandoned the town, and it fell into the hands of the king. The Moors of Martos did the like. The Alcazar of Baeza yielded also to the king, who placed in it Don Lope Diaz de Haro with five hundred men.

Abullale, the Moorish sovereign of Seville, was alarmed at seeing the advances which the Christians were making in Andalusia; and attempted to wrest from their hands these newly

* *Cron. Gen. de España*, pt. 4, fol. 373.

acquired places. He marched upon Martos, which was not strongly walled. The Countess Doña Yrenia, wife to Don Alvar Perez de Castro, was in this place, and her husband was absent. Don Tello Alonzo, with a Spanish force, hastened to her assistance. Finding the town closely invested, he formed his men into a troop, and endeavored to cut his way through the enemy. A rude conflict ensued, the cavaliers fought their way forward, and Christian and Moor arrived pell-mell at the gate of the town. Here the press was excessive. Fernan Gomez de Pudiello, a stout cavalier, who bore the pennon of Don Tello Alonzo, was slain, and the same fate would have befallen Don Tello himself, but that a company of esquires sallied from the town to his rescue.

King Abullale now encircled the town, and got possession of the Peña, or rock, which commands it, killing two hundred Christians who defended it.

Provisions began to fail the besieged, and they were reduced to slay their horses for food, and even to eat the hides. Don Gonsalvo Ybañez, master of Calatrava, who was in Baeza, hearing of the extremity of the place, came suddenly with seventy men and effected an entrance. The augmentation of the garrison only served to increase the famine, without

being sufficient in force to raise the siege. At length word was brought to Don Alvar Perez de Castro, who was with the king at Guadalaxara, of the imminent danger to which his wife was exposed. He instantly set off for her relief, accompanied by several cavaliers of note, and a strong force. They succeeded in getting into Martos, recovered the Peña, or rock, and made such vigorous defense that Abullale abandoned the siege in despair. In the following year King Fernando led his host to take revenge upon this Moorish King of Seville; but the latter purchased a truce for one year with three hundred maravedis of silver.*

* *Cron. Gen. de España*, pt. 4, c. ii.

Chapter V.

Aben Hud—Abullale Purchases Another Year's Truce —Fernando Hears of the Death of his Father, the King of Leon, while Pressing the Siege of Jaen— He Becomes Sovereign of the Two Kingdoms of Leon and Castile.

ABOUT this time a valiant sheik, named Aben Abdallar Mohammed ben Hud, but commonly called Aben Hud, was effecting a great revolution in Moorish affairs. He was of the lineage of Aben Alfange, and bitterly opposed to the sect of Almohades, who for a long time had exercised a tyrannical sway. Stirring up the Moors of Murcia to rise upon their oppressors, he put himself at their head, massacred all the Almohades that fell into his hands, and made himself sheik or king of that region. He purified the mosques with water, after the manner in which Christians purify their churches, as though they had been defiled by the Almohades. Aben Hud

acquired a name among those of his religion for justice and good faith as well as valor; and after some opposition, gained sway over all Andalusia. This brought him in collision with King Fernando. . . .

☞ (Something is wanting here.)*

laying waste fields of grain. The Moorish sovereign of Seville purchased another year's truce of him for three hundred thousand maravedis of silver. Aben Hud, on the other hand, collected a great force and marched to oppose him, but did not dare to give him battle. He went, therefore, upon Merida, and fought with King Alfonso of Leon, father of King Fernando, where, however, he met with complete discomfiture.

* The hiatus, here noted by the author, has evidently arisen from the loss of a leaf of his manuscript. The printed line which precedes the parenthesis concludes page 32 of the manuscript; the line which follows it begins page 34. The intermediate page is wanting. I presume the author did not become conscious of his loss until he had resorted to his manuscript for revision, and that he could not depend upon his memory to supply what was wanting without a fresh resort to authorities not at hand. Hence a postponement and ultimate omission. The missing leaf would scarce have filled half a page of print, and, it would seem from the context, must have related the invasion of Andalusia by Fernando and the ravages committed by his armies.—Ed.

On the following year King Fernando repeated his invasion of Andalusia, and was pressing the siege of the city of Jaen, which he assailed by means of engines discharging stones, when a courier arrived in all speed from his mother, informing him that his father, Alfonso, was dead, and urging him to proceed instantly to Leon, to enforce his pretensions to the crown. King Fernando accordingly raised the siege of Jaen, sending his engines to Martos, and repaired to Castile, to consult with his mother, who was his counsellor on all occasions.

It appeared that in his last will King Alfonso had named his two daughters joint heirs to the crown. Some of the Leonese and Gallegos were disposed to place the Prince Alonzo, brother to King Fernando, on the throne; but he had listened to the commands of his mother, and had resisted all suggestions of the kind; the larger part of the kingdom, including the most important cities, had declared for Fernando.

Accompanied by his mother, King Fernando proceeded instantly into the kingdom of Leon with a powerful force. Wherever they went the cities threw open their gates to them. The princesses Doña Sancha and Doña Dulce, with their mother, Theresa, would have assembled a force to oppose them, but the prelates were

all in favor of King Fernando. On his approach to Leon, the bishops and clergy and all the principal inhabitants came forth to receive him, and conducted him to the cathedral, where he received their homage, and was proclaimed king, with the *Te Deums* of the choir and the shouts of the people.

Doña Theresa, who, with her daughters, was in Galicia, finding the kingdom thus disposed of, sent to demand provision for herself and the two princesses, who, in fact, were step-sisters of King Fernando. Queen Berenguela, though she had some reason not to feel kindly disposed towards Doña Theresa, who she might think had been exercising a secret influence over her late husband, yet suppressed all such feelings, and undertook to repair in person to Galicia, and negotiate this singular family question. She had an interview with Queen Theresa at Valencia de Merlio in Galicia, and arranged a noble dower for her, and an annual revenue to each of her daughters of thirty thousand maravedis of gold. The king then had a meeting with his sisters at Benevente, where they resigned all pretensions to the throne. All the fortified places which held for them were given up, and thus Fernando became undisputed sovereign of the two kingdoms of Castile and Leon.

Chapter VI.

Expedition of the Prince Alonzo against the Moors—Encamps on the Banks of the Guadalete—Aben Hud Marches Out from Xerez and Gives Battle—Prowess of Garcia Perez de Vargas—Flight and Pursuit of the Moors—Miracle of the Blessed Santiago.

KING FERNANDO III. having, through the sage counsel and judicious management of his mother, made this amicable arrangement with his step-sisters, by which he gained possession of their inheritance, now found his territories to extend from the Bay of Biscay to the vicinity of the Guadalquivir, and from the borders of Portugal to those of Aragon and Valencia; and in addition to his titles of King of Castile and Leon, called himself King of Spain by seigniorial right. Being at peace with all his Christian neighbors, he now prepared to carry on with more zeal and vigor than ever his holy wars

against the infidels. While making a progress, however, through his dominions, administering justice, he sent his brother, the Prince Alonzo, to make an expedition into the country of the Moors, and to attack the newly-risen power of Aben Hud.

As the Prince Alonzo was young and of little experience, the king sent Don Alvar Perez de Castro, the Castilian, with him as captain, he being stout of heart, strong of hand, and skilled in war. The prince and his captain went from Salamanca to Toledo, where they recruited their force with a troop of cavalry. Thence they proceeded to Andujar, where they sent out corredores, or light foraging troops, who laid waste the country, plundering and destroying and bringing off great booty. Thence they directed their ravaging course toward Cordova, assaulted and carried Palma, and put all its inhabitants to the sword. Following the fertile valley of the Guadalquivir, they scoured the vicinity of Seville, and continued onward for Xerez, sweeping off cattle and sheep from the pastures of Andalusia; driving on long cavalgadas of horses and mules laden with spoil; until the earth shook with the tramping of their feet, and their course was marked by clouds of dust and the smoke of burning villages.

In this desolating foray they were joined by two hundred horse and three hundred foot, Moorish allies, or rather vassals, being led by the son of Aben Mohamed, the King of Baeza.

Arrived within sight of Xerez, they pitched their tents on the banks of the Guadalete—that fatal river, sadly renowned in the annals of Spain for the overthrow of Roderick and the perdition of the kingdom.

Here a good watch was set over the captured flocks and herds which covered the adjacent meadows, while the soldiers, fatigued with ravage, gave themselves up to repose on the banks of the river, or indulged in feasting and revelry, or gambled with each other for their booty.

In the meantime Aben Hud, hearing of this inroad, summoned all his chivalry of the seaboard of Andalusia to meet him in Xerez. They hastened to obey his call; every leader spurred for Xerez with his band of vassals. Thither came also the King of the Azules, with seven hundred horsemen, Moors of Africa, light, vigorous, and active; and the city was full of troops.

The camp of Don Alonzo had a formidable appearance at a distance, from the flocks and herds which surrounded it, the vast number of sumpter mules, and the numerous captives;

Xeres.

From an engraving based on the drawing by Roberts.

command, riding among the troops lightly armed, with truncheon in hand, encouraging every one by word and look and fearless demeanor. To give the most formidable appearance to their little host, he ordered that as many as possible of the foot-soldiers should mount upon the mules and beasts of burden, and form a troop to be kept in reserve. Before the battle he conferred the honor of knighthood on Garcia Perez de Vargas, a cavalier destined to gain renown for hardy deeds of arms.

When the troops were all ready for the field, the prince exhorted them as good Christians to confess their sins and obtain absolution. There was a goodly number of priests and friars with the army, as there generally was with all the plundering expeditions of this holy war, but there were not enough to confess all the army; those, therefore, who could not have a priest or monk for the purpose, confessed to each other.

Among the cavaliers were two noted for their valor; but who, though brothers-in-law, lived in mortal feud. One was Diego Perez, vassal to Alvar Perez and brother to him who had just been armed knight; the other was Pero Miguel, both natives of Toledo. Diego Perez was the one who had given cause of offense.

He now approached his adversary and asked his pardon for that day only ; that, in a time of such mortal peril, there might not be enmity and malice in their hearts. The priests added their exhortations to this request, but Pero Miguel sternly refused pardon. When this was told to the prince and Don Alvar, they likewise entreated Don Miguel to pardon his brother-in-law. "I will," replied he, "if he will come to my arms and embrace me as a brother." But Diego Perez declined the fraternal embrace, for he saw danger in the eye of Pero Miguel, and he knew his savage strength and savage nature, and suspected that he meant to strangle him. So Pero Miguel went into battle without pardoning his enemy who had implored forgiveness.

At this time, say the old chroniclers, the shouts and yells of the Moorish army, the sound of their cymbals, kettle-drums, and other instruments of warlike music were so great that heaven and earth seemed commingled and confounded. In regarding the battle about to overwhelm him, Alvar Perez saw that the only chance was to form the whole army into one mass, and by a headlong assault to break the centre of the enemy. In this emergency he sent word to the prince, who was in the rear with the reserve and had five hundred

captives in charge, to strike off the heads of the captives and join him with the whole reserve. This bloody order was obeyed. The prince came to the front, all formed together in one dense column, and then, with the war-cry, "Santiago! Santiago! Castile! Castile!" charged upon the centre of the enemy. The Moors' line was broken by the shock, squadron after squadron was thrown into confusion, Moors and Christians were intermingled, until the field became one scene of desperate, chance-medley fighting. Every Christian cavalier fought as if the salvation of the field depended upon his single arm. Garcia Perez de Vargas, who had been knighted just before the battle, proved himself worthy of the honor. He had three horses killed under him, and engaged in a desperate combat with the King of the Azules, whom at length he struck dead from his horse. The king had crossed from Africa on a devout expedition in the cause of the Prophet Mahomet. "Verily," says Antonio Agapida, "he had his reward."

Diego Perez was not behind his brother in prowess; and Heaven favored him in that deadly fight, notwithstanding that he had not been pardoned by his enemy. In the heat of the battle he had broken both sword and lance; whereupon, tearing off a great knotted limb

from an olive-tree, he laid about him with such vigor and manhood that he who got one blow in the head from the war-club never needed another. Don Alvar Perez, who witnessed his feats, was seized with delight. At each fresh blow that cracked a Moslem skull he would cry out: "Assi! assi! Diego; machacha! machacha!" (So! so! Diego; smash them! smash them!) and from that day forward that strong-handed cavalier went by the name of Diego Machacha, or Diego the Smasher, and it remained the surname of several of his lineage.

At length the Moors gave way and fled for the gates of Xerez; being hotly pursued they stumbled over the bodies of the slain, and thus many were taken prisoners. At the gates the press was so great that they killed each other in striving to enter; and the Christian sword made slaughter under the walls.

The Christians gathered spoils of the field, after this victory, until they were fatigued with collecting them, and the precious articles found in the Moorish tents were beyond calculation. Their camp-fires were supplied with the shafts of broken lances, and they found ample use for the cords and osier bands which the Moors had provided to bind their expected captives.

It was a theme of much marvel and solemn

meditation that of all the distinguished cavaliers who entered into this battle, not one was lost, excepting the same Pero Miguel who refused to pardon his adversary. What became of him no one could tell. The last that was seen of him he was in the midst of the enemy, cutting down and overturning, for he was a valiant warrior and of prodigious strength. When the battle and pursuit were at an end, and the troops were recalled by sound of trumpet, he did not appear. His tent remained empty. The field of battle was searched, but he was nowhere to be found. Some supposed that, in his fierce eagerness to make havoc among the Moors, he had entered the gates of the city and there been slain; but his fate remained a mere matter of conjecture, and the whole was considered an awful warning that no Christian should go into battle without pardoning those who asked forgiveness.

"On this day," says the worthy Agapida, "it pleased Heaven to work one of its miracles in favor of the Christian host; for the blessed Santiago appeared in the air on a white horse, with a white banner in one hand and a sword in the other, accompanied by a band of cavaliers in white. This miracle," he adds, "was beheld by many men of verity and worth,"

probably the monks and priests who accompanied the army, "as well as by numbers of the Moors, who declared that the greatest slaughter was effected by those sainted warriors."

It may be as well to add that Fray Antonio Agapida is supported in this marvellous fact by Rodrigo, Archbishop of Toledo, one of the most learned and pious men of the age, who lived at the time and records it in his chronicle. It is a matter, therefore, placed beyond the doubts of the profane.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—A memorandum at the foot of this page of the author's manuscript reminds him to "notice death of Queen Beatrix about this time," but the text continues silent on the subject. According to Mariana, she died in the city of Toro in 1235, before the siege of Cordova. Another authority gives the 5th of November, 1236, as the date of the decease, which would be some months after the downfall of that renowned city. Her body was interred in the nunnery of Las Huelgas at Burgos, and many years afterwards removed to Seville, where reposed the remains of her husband.

Chapter VII.

A Bold Attempt upon Cordova, the Seat of Moorish Power.

ABOUT this time certain Christian cavaliers of the frontiers received information from Moorish captives that the noble city of Cordova was negligently guarded, so that the suburbs might easily be surprised. They immediately concerted a bold attempt, and sent to Pedro and Alvar Perez, who were at Martos, entreating them to aid them with their vassals. Having collected a sufficient force, and prepared scaling ladders, they approached the city on a dark night in January, amid showers of rain and howling blasts, which prevented their footsteps being heard. Arrived at the foot of the ramparts, they listened, but could hear no sentinel. The guards had shrunk into the watch-towers for shelter from the pelting storm, and the

garrison was in profound sleep, for it was the midwatch of the night.

Some, disheartened by the difficulties of the place, were for abandoning the attempt, but Domingo Muñoz, their *adalid*, or guide, encouraged them. Silently fastening ladders together, so as to be of sufficient length, they placed them against one of the towers. The first who mounted were Alvar Colodro and Benito de Banos, who were dressed as Moors and spoke the Arabic language. The tower which they scaled is to this day called the tower of Alvar Colodro. Entering it suddenly but silently, they found four Moors asleep, whom they seized and threw over the battlements, and the Christians below immediately despatched them. By this time a number more of Christians had mounted the ladder, and sallying forth, sword in hand, upon the wall, they gained possession of several towers and of the gate of Martos. Throwing open the gate, Pero Ruyź Tabur galloped in at the head of a squadron of horse, and by the dawn of day the whole suburbs of Cordova, called the Axarquia, were in their possession; the inhabitants having hastily gathered such of their most valuable effects as they could carry with them, and taken refuge in the city.

The cavaliers now barricaded every street of

the suburbs excepting the principal one, which was broad and straight; the Moors, however, made frequent sallies upon them, or showered down darts and arrows and stones from the walls and towers of the city. The cavaliers soon found that they had got into warm quarters, which it would cost them blood and toil to maintain. They sent off messengers, therefore, to Don Alvar Perez, then at Martos, and to King Fernando, at Benevente, craving instant aid. The messenger to the king travelled day and night, and found the king at table, when, kneeling down, he presented the letter with which he was charged.

No sooner had the king read the letter than he called for horse and weapon. All Benevente instantly resounded with the clang of arms and tramp of steed; couriers galloped off in every direction, rousing the towns and villages to arms, and ordering every one to join the king on the frontier. "Cordova! Cordova!" was the war-cry,—that proud city of the infidels! that seat of Moorish power! The king waited not to assemble a great force, but, within an hour after receiving the letter, was on the road with a hundred good cavaliers.

It was the depth of winter; the rivers were swollen with rain. The royal party were often obliged to halt on the bank of some raging

stream until its waters should subside. The king was all anxiety and impatience. Cordova! Cordova! was the prize to be won, and the cavaliers might be driven out of the suburbs before he could arrive to their assistance.

Arrived at Cordova, he proceeded to the bridge of Alcolea, where he pitched his tents and displayed the royal standard.

Before the arrival of the king, Alvar Perez had hastened from the castle of Martos with a body of troops, and thrown himself into the suburbs. Many warriors, both horse and foot, had likewise hastened from the frontiers and from the various towns to which the king had sent his mandates. Some came to serve the king, others out of devotion to the holy faith, some to gain renown, and not a few to aid in plundering the rich city of Cordova. There were many monks, also, who had come for the glory of God and the benefit of their convents.

When the Christians in the suburbs saw the royal standard floating above the camp of the king, they shouted for joy, and in the exultation of the moment forgot all past dangers and hardships.

Chapter VIII.

A Spy in the Christian Camp—Death of Aben Hud—A Vital Blow to Moslem Power—Surrender of Cordova to King Fernando.

ABEN HUD, the Moorish chief, who had been defeated by Alvar Perez and Prince Alonzo before Xerez, was at this time in Ecija with a large force, and disposed to hasten to the aid of Cordova, but his recent defeat had made him cautious. He had in his camp a Christian cavalier, Don Lorenzo Xuares by name, who had been banished from Castile by King Fernando. This cavalier offered to go as a spy into the Christian camp, accompanied by three Christian horsemen, and to bring accounts of its situation and strength. His offer was gladly accepted, and Aben Hud promised to do nothing with his forces until his return.

Don Lorenzo set out privately with his companions, and when he came to the end of

the bridge he alighted and took one of the three with him, leaving the other two to guard the horses. He entered the camp without impediment, and saw that it was small and of but little force; for, though recruits had repaired from all quarters, they had as yet arrived in but scanty numbers.

As Don Lorenzo approached the camp he saw a *montero* who stood sentinel. "Friend," said he, "do me the kindness to call to me some person who is about the king, as I have something to tell him of great importance." The sentinel went in, and brought out Don Otiella. Don Lorenzo took him aside and said: "Do you not know me? I am Don Lorenzo. I pray you tell the king that I entreat permission to enter and communicate matters touching his safety."

Don Otiella went in and awoke the king, who was sleeping, and obtained permission for Don Lorenzo to enter. When the king beheld him he was wroth at his presuming to return from exile; but Don Lorenzo replied: "Señor, your majesty banished me to the land of the Moors to do me harm, but I believe it was intended by Heaven for the welfare both of your majesty and myself." Then he apprised the king of the intention of Aben Hud to come with a great force against him, and of the

doubts and fears he entertained lest the army of the king should be too powerful. Don Lorenzo, therefore, advised the king to draw off as many troops as could be spared from the suburbs of Cordova, and to give his camp as formidable an aspect as possible; and that he would return and give Aben Hud such an account of the power of the royal camp as would deter him from the attack. "If," continued Don Lorenzo, "I fail in diverting him from his enterprise, I will come off with all my vassals and offer myself, and all I can command, for the service of your majesty, and hope to be accepted for my good intentions. As to what takes place in the Moorish camp, from hence, in three days, I will send your majesty letters by this my squire."

The king thanked Don Lorenzo for his good intentions, and pardoned him, and took him as his vassal; and Don Lorenzo said: "I beseech your majesty to order that for three or four nights there be made great fires in various parts of the camp, so that in case Aben Hud should send scouts by night, there may be the appearance of a great host." The king promised it should be done, and Don Lorenzo took his leave; rejoining his companions at the bridge, they mounted their horses and travelled all night, and returned to Ecija.

When Don Lorenzo appeared in presence of Aben Hud he had the air of one fatigued and careworn. To the inquiries of the Moor he returned answers full of alarm, magnifying the power and condition of the royal forces. "Señor," added he, "if you would be assured of the truth of what I say, send out your scouts, and they will behold the Christian tents whitening all the banks of the Guadalquivir, and covering the country as the snow covers the mountains of Granada; or at night they will see fires on hill and dale illumining all the land."

This intelligence redoubled the doubts and apprehensions of Aben Hud. On the following day two Moorish horsemen arrived in all haste from Zaen, King of Valencia, informing him that King James of Aragon was coming against that place with a powerful army, and offering him the supremacy of the place if he would hasten with all speed to its relief.

Aben Hud, thus perplexed between two objects, asked advice of his counsellors, among whom was the perfidious Don Lorenzo. They observed that the Christians, though they had possession of the suburbs of Cordova, could not for a long time master the place. He would have time, therefore, to relieve Valencia, and then turn his arms and those of King Zaen against the host of King Fernando.

Aben Hud listened to their advice, and marched immediately for Almeria, to take thence his ships to guard the port of Valencia. While at Almeria a Moor named Aben Arramin, and who was his especial favorite, invited him to a banquet. The unsuspecting Aben Hud threw off his cares for the time, and, giving loose to conviviality in the house of his favorite, drank freely of the wine-cup that was insidiously pressed upon him, until he became intoxicated. He was then suffocated by the traitor in a trough of water, and it was given out that he had died of apoplexy.

At the death of Aben Hud, his host fell asunder, and every one hied him to his home, whereupon Don Lorenzo and the Christians who were with him hastened to King Fernando, by whom they were graciously received and admitted into his royal service.

The death of Aben Hud was a vital blow to Moslem power, and spread confusion throughout Andalusia. When the people of Cordova heard of it, and of the dismemberment of his army, all courage withered from their hearts. Day after day the army of King Fernando was increasing; the roads were covered with foot-soldiers hastening to his standard; every hidalgo who could bestride a horse spurred to the banks of the Guadalquivir to be present at

the downfall of Cordova. The noblest cavaliers of Castile were continually seen marching into the camp with banners flying and long trains of retainers.

The inhabitants held out as long as there was help or hope; but they were exhausted by frequent combats and long and increasing famine, and now the death of Aben Hud cut off all chance of succor. With sad and broken spirits, therefore, they surrendered their noble city to King Fernando, after a siege of six months and six days. The surrender took place on Sunday, the twenty-ninth day of July, the feast of the glorious Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, in the year of the Incarnation one thousand two hundred and thirty-six.

The inhabitants were permitted to march forth in personal safety, but to take nothing with them. "Thus," exclaims the pious Agapida, "was the city of Cordova, the queen of the cities of Andalusia, which so long had been the seat of the power and grandeur of the Moors, cleansed from all the impurities of Mahomet and restored to the dominion of the true faith."

King Fernando immediately ordered the cross to be elevated on the tower of the principal mosque, and beside it the royal standard; while the bishops, the clergy, and all the

people chanted *Te Deum Laudamus*, as a song of triumph for this great victory of the faith.*

The king, having now gained full possession of the city, began to repair, embellish, and improve it. The grand mosque, the greatest and most magnificent in Spain, was now converted into a holy Catholic church. The bishops and other clergy walked round it in solemn procession, sprinkling holy water in every nook and corner, and performing all other rites and ceremonies necessary to purify and sanctify it. They erected an altar in it, also, in honor of the Virgin, and chanted masses with great fervor and unction. In this way they consecrated it to the true faith, and made it the cathedral of the city.

In this mosque were found the bells of the church of San Iago in Galicia, which the Alhagib Almanzor, in the year of our Redemption nine hundred and seventy-five, had brought off in triumph and placed here, turned with their mouths upward to serve as lamps, and remain shining mementos of his victory. King Fernando ordered that these bells should be restored to the church of San Iago; and as Christians had been obliged to bring those bells hither on their shoulders, so infidels were compelled in like manner to carry them back.

* *Cron. Gen. de España*, pt. 4. Bleda, lib. 4, c. 10.

Great was the popular triumph when these bells had their tongues restored to them, and were once more enabled to fill the air with their holy clangor.

Having ordered all things for the security and welfare of the city, the king placed it under the government of Don Tello Alonzo de Meneses; he appointed Don Alvar Perez de Castro, also, general of the frontier, having his stronghold in the castle of the rock of Martos. The king then returned, covered with glory, to Toledo.

The fame of the recovery of the renowned city of Cordova, which for five hundred and twenty-two years had been in the power of the infidels, soon spread throughout the kingdom, and people came crowding from every part to inhabit it. The gates which lately had been thronged with steel-clad warriors were now besieged by peaceful wayfarers of all kinds, conducting trains of mules laden with their effects and all their household wealth; and so great was the throng that in a little while there were not houses sufficient to receive them.

King Fernando, having restored the bells to San Iago, had others suspended in the tower of the mosque, whence the muezzin had been accustomed to call the Moslems to their worship. "When the pilgrims," says Fray An-

tonio Agapida, "who repaired to Cordova, heard the holy sound of these bells chiming from the tower of the cathedral, their hearts leaped for joy, and they invoked blessings on the head of the pious King Fernando.

Chapter IX.

Marriage of King Fernando to the Princess Juana—Famine at Cordova—Don Alvar Perez.

WHEN Queen Berenguela beheld King Fernando returning in triumph from the conquest of Cordova, her heart was lifted up with transport, for there is nothing that more rejoices the heart of a mother than the true glory of her son. The queen, however, as has been abundantly shown, was a woman of great sagacity and forecast. She considered that upwards of two years had elapsed since the death of the Queen Beatrix, and that her son was living in widowhood. It is true he was of quiet temperament, and seemed sufficiently occupied by the cares of government and the wars for the faith; so that apparently he had no thought of further matrimony; but the shrewd mother considered likewise that he was in the prime and vigor

of his days, renowned in arms, noble and commanding in person, and gracious and captivating in manners, and surrounded by the temptations of a court. True, he was a saint in spirit, but, after all, in flesh he was a man, and might be led away into those weaknesses very incident to, but highly unbecoming of, the exalted state of princes. The good mother was anxious, therefore, that he should enter again into the secure and holy state of wedlock.

King Fernando, a mirror of obedience to his mother, readily concurred with her views in the present instance, and left it to her judgment and discretion to make a choice for him. The choice fell upon the Princess Juana, daughter of the Count of Pothier, and a descendant of Louis the Seventh of France. The marriage was negotiated by Queen Berenguela with the Count of Pothier; and the conditions being satisfactorily arranged, the princess was conducted in due state to Burgos, where the nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and ceremony.

The king, as well as his subjects, was highly satisfied with the choice of the sage Berenguela, for the bride was young, beautiful, and of stately form, and conducted herself with admirable suavity and grace.

After the rejoicings were over, King Fernando departed with his bride and visited the principal cities and towns of Castile and Leon; receiving the homage of his subjects, and administering justice according to the primitive forms of those days, when sovereigns attended personally to the petitions and complaints of their subjects, and went about hearing causes and redressing grievances.

In the course of his progress, hearing while at Toledo of a severe famine which prevailed at Cordova, he sent a large supply of money to that city, and at the same time issued orders to various parts, to transport thither as much grain as possible. The calamity, however, went on increasing. The conquest of Cordova had drawn thither great multitudes, expecting to thrive on the well-known fertility and abundance of the country. But the Moors, in the agitation of the time, had almost ceased to cultivate their fields; the troops helped to consume the supplies on hand; there were few hands to labor and an infinity of mouths to eat, and the cry of famine went on daily growing more intense.

Upon this, Don Alvar Perez, who had command of the frontier, set off to represent the case in person to the king; for one living word from the mouth is more effective than a

thousand dead words from the pen. He found the king at Valladolid, deeply immersed in the religious exercises of Holy Week, and much did it grieve this saintly monarch, say his chroniclers, to be obliged even for a moment to quit the holy quiet of the church for the worldly bustle of the palace, to lay by the saint and enact the sovereign. Having heard the representations of Don Alvar Perez, he forthwith gave him ample funds wherewith to maintain his castles, his soldiers, and even the idlers who thronged about the frontier, and who would be useful subjects when the times should become settled. Satisfied, also, of the zeal and loyalty of Alvar Perez, which had been so strikingly displayed in the present instance, he appointed him *adelantado* of the whole frontier of Andalusia—an office equivalent to that at present called viceroy. Don Alvar hastened back to execute his mission and enter upon his new office. He took his station at Martos, in its rock-built castle, which was the key of all that frontier, whence he could carry relief to any point of his command, and could make occasional incursions into the territories. The following chapter will show the cares and anxieties which awaited him in his new command.

Chapter X.

Aben Alhamar, Founder of the Alhambra—Fortifies Granada and Makes it his Capital—Attempts to Surprise the Castle of Martos—Peril of the Fortress —A Woman's Stratagem to Save it—Diego Perez, the Smasher—Death of Count Alvar Perez de Castro.

ON the death of Aben Hud, the Moorish power in Spain was broken up into factions, as has already been mentioned, but these factions were soon united under one head, who threatened to be a formidable adversary to the Christians. This was Mohammed ben Alhamar, or Aben Alhamar, as he is commonly called in history. He was a native of Arjona, of noble descent, being of the Beni Nasar, or race of Nasar, and had been educated in a manner befitting his rank. Arrived at manly years, he had been appointed alcayde of Arjona and Jaen, and had distinguished himself by the justice and benignity of his rule. He was intrepid, also, and am-

bitious, and during the late dissensions among the Moslems had extended his territories, making himself master of many strong places.

On the death of Aben Hud, he made a military circuit through the Moorish territories, and was everywhere hailed with acclamations as the only one who could save the Moslem power in Spain from annihilation. At length he entered Granada amidst the enthusiastic shouts of the populace. He was proclaimed king, and found himself at the head of the Moslems of Spain, being the first of his illustrious line that ever sat upon a throne. It needs nothing more to give lasting renown to Aben Alhamar than to say he was the founder of the Alhambra, that magnificent monument which to this day bears testimony to Moorish taste and splendor. As yet, however, Aben Alhamar had not time to indulge in the arts of peace. He saw the storm of war that threatened his newly founded kingdom, and prepared to buffet with it. The territories of Granada extended along the coast from Algeziras almost to Murcia, and inland as far as Jaen and Huescar. All the frontiers he hastened to put in a state of defense, while he strongly fortified the city of Granada, which he made his capital.

By the Mahometan law every citizen is a

soldier, and to take arms in defense of the country and the faith is a religious and imperative duty. Aben Alhamar, however, knew the unsteadiness of hastily levied militia, and organized a standing force to garrison his forts and cities, the expense of which he defrayed from his own revenues. The Moslem warriors from all parts now rallied under his standard, and fifty thousand Moors, abandoning Valencia on the conquest of that country by the king of Aragon, hastened to put themselves under the dominion of Aben Alhamar.

Don Alvar Perez, on returning to his post, had intelligence of all these circumstances, and perceived that he had not sufficient force to make head against such a formidable neighbor, and that, in fact, the whole frontier, so recently wrested from the Moors, was in danger of being reconquered. With his old maxim, therefore, "There is more life in one word from the mouth than in a thousand words from the pen," he determined to have another interview with King Fernando, and acquaint him with the imminent dangers impending over the frontier.

He accordingly took his departure with great secrecy, leaving his countess and her women and *donzellas* in his castle of the rock of Martos, guarded by his nephew Don Tello and forty chosen men.

The departure of Don Alvar Perez was not so secret, however, but that Aben Alhamar had notice of it by his spies, and he resolved to make an attempt to surprise the castle of Martos, which, as has been said, was the key to all this frontier.

Don Tello, who had been left in command of the fortress, was a young galliard, full of the fire of youth, and he had several hardy and adventurous cavaliers with him, among whom was Diego Perez de Vargas, surnamed Machacha, or the Smasher, for his exploits at the battle of Xerez in smashing the heads of the Moors with the limb of an olive-tree. These hot-blooded cavaliers, looking out like hawks from their mountain hold, were seized with an irresistible inclination to make a foray into the lands of their Moorish neighbors. On a bright morning they accordingly set forth, promising the *donzellas* of the castle to bring them jewels and rich silks, the spoils of Moorish women.

The cavaliers had not been long gone when the castle was alarmed by the sound of trumpets, and the watchman from the tower gave notice of a cloud of dust, with Moorish banners and armor gleaming through it. It was, in fact, the Moorish king, Aben Alhamar, who pitched his tents before the castle.

Great was the consternation that reigned

within the walls, for all the men were absent, excepting one or two necessary for the service of the castle. The dames and *donzellas* gave themselves up to despair, expecting to be carried away captive, perhaps to supply some Moorish harem. The countess, however, was of an intrepid spirit and ready invention. Summoning her dueñas and damsels, she made them arrange their hair, and dress themselves like men, take weapons in hand, and show themselves between the battlements. The Moorish king was deceived, and supposed the fort well garrisoned. He was deterred, therefore, from attempting to take it by storm. In the meantime she despatched a messenger by the postern-gate, with orders to speed swiftly in quest of Don Tello, and tell him the peril of the fortress.

At hearing these tidings, Don Tello and his companions turned their reins and spurred back for the castle, but on drawing nigh, they saw from a hill that it was invested by a numerous host who were battering the walls. It was an appalling sight,—to cut their way through such a force seemed hopeless,—yet their hearts were wrung with anguish when they thought of the countess and her helpless *donzellas*. Upon this, Diego Perez de Vargas, surnamed Machacha, stepped forward and pro-

posed to form a forlorn hope, and attempt to force a passage to the castle. "If any of us succeed," said he, "we may save the countess and the rock; if we fall, we shall save our souls and act the parts of good cavaliers. This rock is the key of all the frontier, on which the king depends to get possession of the country. Shame would it be if Moors should capture it; above all if they should lead our honored countess and her ladies captive before our eyes, while our lances remain unstained by blood and we unscarred with a wound. For my part, I would rather die than see it. Life is but short; we should do in it our best. So, in a word, cavaliers, if you refuse to join me I will take my leave of you and do what I can with my single arm."

"Diego Perez," cried Don Tello, "you have spoken my very wishes; I will stand by you until the death, and let those who are good cavaliers and hidalgos follow our example."

The other cavaliers caught fire at these words; forming a solid squadron, they put spurs to their horses and rushed down upon the Moors. The first who broke into the ranks of the enemy was Diego Perez, the Smasher, and he opened a way for the others. Their only object was to cut their way to the fortress, so they fought and pressed forward. The most of

them got to the rock; some were cut off by the Moors, and died like valiant knights, fighting to the last gasp.

When the Moorish king saw the daring of these cavaliers, and that they had succeeded in reinforcing the garrison, he despaired of gaining the castle without much time, trouble, and loss of blood. He persuaded himself, therefore, that it was not worth the price, and, striking his tents, abandoned the siege. Thus the rock of Martos was saved by the sagacity of the countess and the prowess of Diego Perez de Vargas, surnamed the Smasher.

In the meantime Don Alvar Perez de Castro arrived in presence of the king at Hutiel. King Fernando received him with benignity, but seemed to think his zeal beyond his prudence; leaving so important a frontier so weakly guarded, sinking the viceroy in the courier, and coming so far to give by word of mouth what might easily have been communicated by letter. He felt the value, however, of his loyalty and devotion, but, furnishing him with ample funds, requested him to lose no time in getting back to his post. The count set out on his return, but it is probable the ardor and excitement of his spirit proved fatal to him, for he was seized with a violent fever when on the journey, and died in the town of Orgaz.

Chapter XI.

Aben Hudiel, the Moorish King of Murcia, Becomes the Vassal of King Fernando—Aben Alhamar Seeks to Drive the Christians out of Andalusia—Fernando Takes the Field against him—Ravages of the King—His Last Meeting with the Queen-Mother.

THE death of Count Alvar Perez de Castro caused deep affliction to King Fernando, for he considered him the shield of the frontier. While he was at Cordova, or at his rock of Martos, the king felt as assured of the safety of the border as though he had been there himself. As soon as he could be spared from Castile and Leon, he hastened to Cordova, to supply the loss the frontier had sustained in the person of his vigilant lieutenant. One of his first measures was to effect a truce of one year with the king of Granada,—a measure which each adopted with great regret, compelled by his several policy: King Fernando to organize and secure

his recent conquests; Aben Alhamar to regulate and fortify his newly founded kingdom. Each felt that he had a powerful enemy to encounter and a desperate struggle before him.

King Fernando remained at Cordova until the spring of the following year (1241), regulating the affairs of that noble city, assigning houses and estates to such of his cavaliers as had distinguished themselves in the conquest, and, as usual, making rich donations of towns and great tracts of land to the Church and to different religious orders. Leaving his brother Alfonso with a sufficient force to keep an eye upon the king of Granada and hold him in check, King Fernando departed for Castile, making a circuit by Jaen and Baeza and Andujar, and arriving in Toledo on the fourth of April. Here he received important propositions from Aben Hudiel, the Moorish King of Murcia. The death of Aben Hud had left that kingdom a scene of confusion. The alcaydes of the different cities and fortresses were at strife with each other, and many refused allegiance to Aben Hudiel. The latter, too, was in hostility with Aben Alhamar, the King of Granada, and he feared he would take advantage of his truce with King Fernando, and the distracted state of the kingdom of Murcia, to make an inroad. Thus desperately situated,

Aben Hudiel had sent missives to king Fernando, entreating his protection, and offering to become his vassal.

The king of Castile gladly closed with this offer. He forthwith sent his son and heir, the Prince Alfonso, to receive the submission of the king of Murcia. As the prince was young and inexperienced in these affairs of state, he sent with him Don Pelayo de Correa, the Grand Master of Santiago, a cavalier of consummate wisdom and address, and also Rodrigo Gonzalez Giron. The prince was received in Murcia with regal honors; the terms were soon adjusted by which the Moorish king acknowledged vassalage to King Fernando, and ceded to him one half of his revenues, in return for which the king graciously took him under his protection. The alcaydes of Alicant, Elche, Oriola, and several other places agreed to this covenant of vassalage, but it was indignantly spurned by the Wali of Lorca; he had been put in office by Aben Hud; and, now that potentate was no more, he aspired to exercise an independent sway, and had placed alcaydes of his own party in Mula and Carthagena.

As the Prince Alfonso had come to solemnize the act of homage and vassalage proposed by the Moorish king, and not to extort submission from his subjects by force of arms, he contented

himself with making a progress through the kingdom and receiving the homage of the acquiescent towns and cities, after which he rejoined his father in Castile.

It is conceived by the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, as well as by other monkish chroniclers, that this important acquisition of territory by the saintly Fernando was a boon from Heaven in reward of an offering which he made to God of his daughter Berenguela, whom early in this year he dedicated as a nun in the convent of Las Huelgas, in Burgos—of which convent the king's sister Constanza was abbess.*

About this time it was that King Fernando gave an instance of his magnanimity and his chivalrous disposition. We have seen the deadly opposition he had experienced from the haughty house of Lara, and the ruin which the three brothers brought upon themselves by their traitorous hostility. The anger of the king was appeased by their individual ruin; he did not desire to revenge himself upon their helpless families, nor to break down and annihilate a house lofty and honored in the traditions of Spain. One of the brothers, Don Fernando, had left a daughter, Doña Sancha Fernandez de Lara; there happened at this time to be in Spain a cousin-german of the king, a prince

* *Cronica del Rey Santo*, cap. 18.

of Portugal, Don Fernando by name, who held the señoria of Serpa. Between this prince and Doña Sancha the king effected a marriage, whence has sprung one of the most illustrious branches of the ancient house of Lara.* The other daughters of Don Fernando retained large possessions in Castile; and one of his sons will be found serving valiantly under the standard of the king.

In the meantime the truce with Aben Alhamar, the King of Granada, had greatly strengthened the hands of that monarch. He had received accessions of troops from various parts, had fortified his capital and his frontiers, and now fomented disturbances in the neighboring kingdom of Murcia,—encouraging the refractory cities to persist in their refusal of vassalage,—hoping to annex that kingdom to his own newly consolidated dominions.

The Wali of Lorca and his partisans, the alcaydes of Mula and Carthagena, thus instigated by the king of Granada, now increased in turbulence, and completely overawed the feeble-handed Aben Hudiel. King Fernando thought this a good opportunity to give his son and heir his first essay in arms. He accordingly despatched the prince a second time to Murcia, accompanied as before by Don

* *Notas para la Vida del Santo Rey*, p. 554.

Pelayo de Correa, the Grand Master of Santiago; but he sent him now with a strong military force, to play the part of a conqueror. The conquest, as may be supposed, was easy; Mula, Lorca, and Carthagena soon submitted, and the whole kingdom was reduced to vassalage—Fernando henceforth adding to his other titles King of Murcia. "Thus," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "was another precious jewel wrested from the kingdom of Antichrist, and added to the crown of this saintly monarch."

But it was not in Murcia alone that King Fernando found himself called to contend with his new adversary the king of Granada. That able and active monarch, strengthened as has been said during the late truce, had made bold forays in the frontiers recently conquered by King Fernando, and had even extended them to the neighborhood of Cordova. In all this he had been encouraged by some degree of negligence and inaction on the part of King Fernando's brother Alfonso, who had been left in charge of the frontier. The prince took the field against Aben Alhamar, and fought him manfully; but the Moorish force was too powerful to be withstood, and the prince was defeated.

Tidings of this was sent to King Fernando, and of the great danger of the frontier, as

Aben Alhamar, flushed with success, was aiming to drive the Christians out of Andalusia. King Fernando immediately set off for the frontier, accompanied by the Queen Juana. He did not wait to levy a powerful force, but took with him a small number—knowing the loyalty of his subjects and their belligerent propensities, and that they would hasten to his standard the moment they knew he was in the field and exposed to danger. His force accordingly increased as he advanced. At Andujar he met his brother Alfonso with the relics of his lately defeated army,—all brave and expert soldiers. He had now a commanding force, and leaving the queen with a sufficient guard at Andujar, he set off with his brother Alfonso and Don Nuño Gonzalez de Lara, son of the Count Gonzalo, to scour the country about Arjona, Jaen, and Alcandete. The Moors took refuge in their strong places, whence they saw with aching hearts the desolation of their country—olive plantations on fire, vineyards laid waste, groves and orchards cut down, and all the other modes of ravage practised in these unsparing wars.

The king of Granada did not venture to take the field; and King Fernando, meeting no enemy to contend with, while ravaging the lands of Alcandete, detached a part of his force

under Don Rodrigo Fernandez de Castro, a son of the brave Alvar Perez, lately deceased, and he associated with him Nuño Gonzalez, with orders to besiege Arjona. This was a place dear to Aben Alhamar, the King of Granada, being his native place, where he had first tasted the sweets of power. Hence he was commonly called the King of Arjona.

The people of the place, though they had quailed before King Fernando, despised his officers and set them at defiance. The king himself, however, made his appearance on the following day with the remainder of his forces, whereupon Arjona capitulated.

While his troops were reposing from their fatigues, the king made some further ravages, and reduced several small towns to obedience. He then sent his brother Don Alfonso with sufficient forces to carry fire and sword into the Vega of Granada. In the meantime he returned to Andujar to the Queen Juana. He merely came, say the old chroniclers, for the purpose of conducting her to Cordova; fulfilling, always, his duty as a cavalier, without neglecting that of a king.

The moment he had left her in her palace at Cordova, he hastened back to join his brother in harassing the territories of Granada. He came in time; for Aben Alhamar, enraged at

seeing the destruction of the Vega, made such a vigorous sally that had Prince Alfonso been alone in command, he might have received a second lesson still more disastrous than the first. The presence of the king, however, put new spirits and valor into the troops: the Moors were driven back to the city, and the Christians pursued them to the very gates. As the king had not sufficient forces with him to attempt the capture of this place, he contented himself with the mischief he had done, and, with some more which he subsequently effected, he returned to Cordova to let his troops rest from their fatigues.

While the king was in this city a messenger arrived from his mother, the Queen Berenguela, informing him of her intention of coming to pay him a visit. A long time had elapsed since they had seen each other, and her extreme age rendered her anxious to embrace her son. The king, to prevent her from taking so long a journey, set off to meet her, taking with him his Queen Juana. The meeting took place in Pezuelo near Burgos,* and was affecting on both sides, for never did son and mother love and honor each other more

* Some chronicles, through mistake, make it Pezuelo near Ciudad Real, in the mountains on the confines of Granada.

truly. In this interview, the queen represented her age and increasing weakness, and her incapacity to cope with the fatigues of public affairs, of which she had always shared the burden with the king; she therefore signified her wish to retire to her convent, to pass the remnant of her days in holy repose. King Fernando, who had ever found in his mother his ablest counsellor and best support, entreated her not to leave his side in these arduous times, when the king of Granada on one side, and the king of Seville on the other, threatened to put all his courage and resources to the trial. A long and earnest, yet tender and affectionate, conversation succeeded between them, which resulted in the queen-mother's yielding to his solicitations. The illustrious son and mother remained together six weeks, enjoying each other's society, after which they separated —the king and queen for the frontier, and the queen-mother for Toledo. They were never to behold each other again upon earth, for the king never returned to Castile.

Chapter XII.

King Fernando's Expedition to Andalusia—Siege of Jaen—Secret Departure of Aben Alhamar for the Christian Camp—He Acknowledges himself the Vassal of the King, who Enters Jaen in Triumph.

IT was in the middle of August, 1245, that King Fernando set out on his grand expedition to Andalusia, whence he was never to return. All that autumn he pursued the same destructive course as in his preceding campaigns, laying waste the country with fire and sword in the vicinity of Jaen and to Alcala la Real. The town, too, of Illora, built on a lofty rock and fancying itself secure, was captured and given a prey to flames, which was as a bale-fire to the country. Thence he descended into the beautiful Vega of Granada, ravaging that earthly paradise. Aben Alhamar sallied forth from Granada with what forces he could collect, and a bloody battle

ensued about twelve miles from Granada. A part of the troops of Aben Alhamar were hasty levies, inhabitants of the city, and but little accustomed to combat; they lost courage, gave way, and threw the better part of the troops in disorder; a retreat took place which ended in a headlong flight, in which there was great carnage.*

Content for the present with the ravage he had made and the victory he had gained, King Fernando now drew off his troops and repaired to his frontier hold of Martos, where they might rest after their fatigues in security.

Here he was joined by Don Pelayo Perez Correa, the Grand Master of Santiago. This valiant cavalier, who was as sage and shrewd in council as he was adroit and daring in the field, had aided the youthful Prince Alfonso in completing the tranquillization of Murcia, and leaving him in the quiet administration of affairs in that kingdom, had since been on a pious and political mission to the court of Rome. He arrived most opportunely at Martos, to aid the king with his counsels, for there was none in whose wisdom and loyalty the king had more confidence.

The grand master listened to all the plans of the king for the humiliation of the haughty

* Conde, tom. iii., c. 5.

king of Granada; he then gravely but most respectfully objected to the course the king was pursuing. He held the mere ravaging the country of little ultimate benefit. It harassed and irritated, but did not destroy the enemy, while it fatigued and demoralized the army. To conquer the country, they must not lay waste the field, but take the towns; so long as the Moors retained their strongholds, so long they had dominion over the land. He advised, therefore, as a signal blow to the power of the Moorish king, the capture of the city of Jaen. This was a city of immense strength, the bulwark of the kingdom; it was well supplied with provisions and the munitions of war; strongly garrisoned and commanded by Abu Omar, native of Cordova, a general of cavalry, and one of the bravest officers of Aben Alhamar. King Fernando had already besieged it in vain, but the reasoning of the grand master had either convinced his reason or touched his pride. He set himself down before the walls of Jaen, declaring he would never raise the siege until he was master of the place. For a long time the siege was carried on in the depth of winter, in defiance of rain and tempests. Aben Alhamar was in despair; he could not relieve the place; he could not again venture on a battle with

the king after his late defeat. He saw that Jaen must fall, and feared it would be followed by the fall of Granada. He was a man of ardent spirit and quick and generous impulses. Taking a sudden resolution, he departed secretly for the Christian camp, and made his way to the presence of King Fernando. "Behold before you," said he, "the king of Granada. Resistance I find unavailing; I come, trusting to your magnanimity and good faith, to put myself under your protection and acknowledge myself your vassal." So saying, he knelt and kissed the king's hand in token of homage.

"King Fernando," say the old chroniclers, "was not to be outdone in generosity. He raised his late enemy from the earth, embraced him as a friend, and left him in the sovereignty of his dominions; the good king, however, was as politic as he was generous. He received Aben Alhamar as a vassal; conditioned for the delivery of Jaen into his hands; for the yearly payment of one half of his revenues; for his attendance at the *cortes* as one of the nobles of the empire, and his aiding Castile in war with a certain number of horsemen."

In compliance with these conditions, Jaen was given up to the Christian king, who entered it in triumph about the end of Febru-

ary.* His first care was to repair in grand procession, bearing the holy cross, to the principal mosque, which was purified and sanctified by the bishop of Cordova, and erected into a cathedral and dedicated to the most holy Virgin Mary.

He remained some time in Jaen, giving repose to his troops, regulating the affairs of this important place, disposing of houses and estates among his warriors who had most distinguished themselves, and amply rewarding the priests and monks who had aided him with their prayers.

As to Aben Alhamar, he returned to Granada, relieved from apprehension of impending ruin to his kingdom, but deeply humiliated at having to come under the yoke of vassalage. He consoled himself by prosecuting the arts of peace, improving the condition of his people, building hospitals, founding institutions of learning, and beautifying his capital with those magnificent edifices which remain the admiration of posterity; for now it was that he commenced to build the Alhambra.

NOTE.—There is some dispute among historians as to the duration of the siege and the date of the surrender of Jaen. Some make the siege endure eight

* *Notas para la Vida*, etc., p. 562.

months, from August into the middle of April. The authentic Agapida adopts the opinion of the author of *Notas para la Vida del Santo Rey*, etc., who makes the siege begin on the 31st December, and end about 26th February.

Chapter XIII.

Axataf, King of Seville, Exasperated at the Submission of the King of Granada, Rejects the Propositions of King Fernando for a Truce—The Latter is Encouraged by a Vision to Undertake the Conquest of the City of Seville—Death of Queen Berenguela—A Diplomatic Marriage.

KING FERNANDO, having reduced the fair kingdom of Granada to vassalage, and fortified himself in Andalusia by the possession of the strong city of Jaen, bethought him now of returning to Castile. There was but one Moorish potentate in Spain whose hostilities he had to fear: this was Axataf, the King of Seville. He was the son of Aben Hud, and succeeded to a portion of his territories. Warned by the signal defeat of his father at Xerez, he had forborne to take the field against the Christians, but had spared no pains and expense to put the city of Seville in the highest state of defense; strengthening

its walls and towers, providing it with munitions of war of all kinds, and exercising his people continually in the use of arms. King Fernando was loth to leave this great frontier in its present unsettled state, with such a powerful enemy in the neighborhood, who might take advantage of his absence to break into open hostility; still it was his policy to let the sword rest in the sheath until he had completely secured his new possessions. He sought, therefore, to make a truce with King Axataf, and, to enforce his propositions, it is said he appeared with his army before Seville in May, 1246.* His propositions were rejected, as it were, at the very gate. It appears that the King of Seville was exasperated rather than dismayed by the submission of the king of Granada. He felt that on himself depended the last hope of Islamism in Spain; he trusted on aid from the coast of Barbary, with which his capital had ready communication by water; and he resolved to make a bold stand in the cause of his faith.

King Fernando retired indignant from before Seville, and repaired to Cordova, with the pious determination to punish the obstinacy and humble the pride of the infidel, by planting the standard of the cross on the walls of

* *Notas para la Vida del Santo Rey*, p. 572.

his capital. Seville once in his power, the rest of Andalusia would soon follow, and then his triumph over the sect of Mahomet would be complete. Other reasons may have concurred to make him covet the conquest of Seville. It was a city of great splendor and wealth, situated in the midst of a fertile country, in a genial climate, under a benignant sky; and having by its river, the Guadalquivir, an open highway for commerce, it was the metropolis of all Morisma—a world of wealth and delight within itself.

These were sufficient reasons for aiming at the conquest of this famous city, but these were not sufficient to satisfy the holy friars who have written the history of this monarch, and who have found a reason more befitting his character of saint. Accordingly we are told, by the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, that at a time when the king was in deep affliction for the death of his mother, the Queen Berenguela, and was praying with great fervor, there appeared before him Saint Isidro, the great Apostle of Spain, who had been Archbishop of Seville in old times, before the perdition of Spain by the Moors. As the monarch gazed in reverent wonder at the vision, the saint laid on him a solemn injunction to rescue from the empire of Mahomet his

city of Seville. "*Que asi la llamo por suya en la patria, suya en la silla, y suya en la proteccion.*" "Such," says Agapida, "was the true reason why this pious king undertook the conquest of Seville"; and in this assertion he is supported by many Spanish chroniclers; and by the traditions of the Church—the vision of San Isidro being read to this day among its services.*

The death of Queen Berenguela, to which we have just adverted, happened some months after the conquest of Jaen and submission of Granada. The grief of the king on hearing the tidings, we are told, was past description. For a time it quite overwhelmed him. "Nor is it much to be marvelled at," says an old chronicler; "for never did monarch lose a mother so noble and magnanimous in all her actions. She was indeed accomplished in all things, an example of every virtue, the mirror of Castile and Leon and all Spain, by whose counsel and wisdom the affairs of many kingdoms were governed. This noble queen," continues the chronicler, "was deplored in all the cities, towns, and villages of Castile and Leon; by all people, great and small, but *especially by poor cavaliers*, to whom she was ever a benefactress."†

* Rodriguez, *Memorias del Santo Rey*, c. lviii

† *Cronica del Rey Don Fernando*, c. xiii.

Another heavy loss to King Fernando, about this time, was that of the Archbishop of Toledo, Don Rodrigo, the great adviser of the king in all his expeditions, and the prelate who first preached the grand crusade in Spain. He lived a life of piety, activity, and zeal, and died full of years, of honors, and of riches—having received princely estates and vast revenues from the king in reward of his services in the cause.

These private afflictions for a time occupied the royal mind; the king was also a little disturbed by some rash proceedings of his son, the hereditary Prince Alfonso, who, being left in the government of Murcia, took a notion of imitating his father in his conquests, and made an inroad into the Moorish kingdom of Valencia, at that time in a state of confusion. This brought on a collision with King Jayme of Aragon, surnamed the Conqueror, who had laid his hand upon all Valencia, as by his right of arms. There was thus danger of a rupture with Aragon, and of King Fernando having an enemy on his back, while busied in his wars in Andalusia. Fortunately King Jayme had a fair daughter, the Princess Violante; and the grave diplomatists of the two courts determined that it were better the two children should marry, than the two fathers should

fight. To this arrangement King Fernando and King Jayme gladly assented. They were both of the same faith ; both proud of the name of Christians ; both zealous in driving Mahometanism out of Spain, and in augmenting their empires with its spoils. The marriage was accordingly solemnized in Valladolid in the month of November in this same year ; and now the saintly King Fernando turned his whole energies to this great and crowning achievement, the conquest of Seville, the emporium of Mahometanism in Spain.

Foreseeing, as long as the mouth of the Guadalquivir was open, the city could receive reinforcements and supplies from Africa, the king held consultations with a wealthy man of Burgos, Ramon Bonifaz, or Boniface, by name, —some say a native of France,—one well experienced in maritime affairs, and capable of fitting out and managing a fleet. This man he constituted his admiral, and sent him to Biscay to provide and arm a fleet of ships and galleys, with which to attack Seville by water, while the king should invest it by land.

Chapter XIV.

Investment of Seville—All Spain Aroused to Arms—Surrender of Alcala del Rio—The Fleet of Admiral Ramon Bonifaz Advances up the Guadalquivir—Don Pelayo Correa, Master of Santiago—His Valorous deeds and the Miracles Wrought in his Behalf.

WHEN it was bruited abroad that King Fernando the Saint intended to besiege the great city of Seville, all Spain was roused to arms. The master of the various military and religious orders, the *ricos hombres*, the princes, cavaliers, hidalgos, and every one of Castile and Leon capable of bearing arms, prepared to take the field. Many of the nobility of Catalonia and Portugal repaired to the standard of the king, as did other cavaliers of worth and prowess from lands far beyond the Pyrenees.

Prelates, priests, and monks likewise thronged to the army,—some to take care of

the souls of those who hazarded their lives in this holy enterprise, others with a zealous determination to grasp buckler and lance, and battle with the arm of flesh against the enemies of God and the Church.

At the opening of spring the assembled host issued forth in shining array from the gates of Cordova. After having gained possession of Carmona, and Lora and Alcolea, and of other neighboring places,—some by voluntary surrender, others by force of arms,—the king crossed the Guadalquivir, with great difficulty and peril, and made himself master of several of the most important posts in the neighborhood of Seville. Among these was Alcala del Rio, a place of great consequence, through which passed all the succors from the mountains to the city. This place was bravely defended by Axataf in person, the commander of Seville. He remained in Alcala with three hundred Moorish cavaliers, making frequent sallies upon the Christians, and effecting great slaughter. At length he beheld all the country around laid waste, the grain burnt or trampled down, the vineyards torn up, the cattle driven away, and the villages consumed; so that nothing remained to give sustenance to the garrison or the inhabitants. Not daring to linger there any longer, he departed secretly

in the night and retired to Seville, and the town surrendered to King Fernando.

While the king was putting Alcala del Rio in a state of defense, Admiral Ramon Bonifaz arrived at the mouth of the Guadalquivir with a fleet of thirteen large ships and several small vessels and galleys. While he was yet hovering about the land, he heard of the approach of a great force of ships from Tangier, Ceuta, and Seville, and of an army to assail him from the shores. In this peril he sent in all speed for succor to the king; when it reached the sea-coast the enemy had not yet appeared; wherefore, thinking it a false alarm, the reinforcement returned to the camp. Scarcely, however, had it departed when the Africans came swarming over the sea, and fell upon Ramon Bonifaz with a greatly superior force. The admiral, in no way dismayed, defended himself vigorously—sunk several of the enemy, took a few prizes, and put the rest to flight, remaining master of the river. The king had heard of the peril of the fleet, and, crossing the ford of the river, had hastened to its aid; but when he came to the sea-coast, he found it victorious, at which he was greatly rejoiced, and commanded that it should advance higher up the river.

It was on the twentieth of the month of

August that King Fernando began formally the siege of Seville, having encamped his troops, small in number but of stout hearts and valiant hands, near to the city on the banks of the river. From hence Don Pelayo Correa, the valiant Master of Santiago, with two hundred and sixty horsemen, many of whom were warlike friars, attempted to cross the river at the ford below Aznal Farache. Upon this, Aben Amaken, Moorish King of Niebla, sallied forth with a great host to defend the pass, and the cavaliers were exposed to imminent peril, until the king sent one hundred cavaliers to their aid, led on by Rodrigo Flores and Alonzo Tellez and Fernan Diañez.

Thus reinforced, the Master of Santiago scoured the opposite side of the river, and with his little army of scarce four hundred horsemen, mingled monks and soldiers, spread dismay throughout the country. They attacked the town of Gelbes, and, after a desperate combat, entered it, sword in hand, slaying or capturing the Moors, and making rich booty. They made repeated assaults upon the castle of Triana, and had bloody combats with its garrison, but could not take the place. This hardy band of cavaliers had pitched their tents and formed their little camp on the banks of the river, below the castle of Aznal Farache

This fortress was situated on an eminence above the river, and its massive ruins, remaining at the present day, attest its formidable strength.

When the Moors from the castle towers looked down upon this little camp of Christian cavaliers, and saw them sallying forth and careering about the country, and returning in the evenings with *cavalgadas* of sheep and cattle, and mules laden with spoil, and long trains of captives, they were exceedingly wroth, and they kept a watch upon them, and sallied forth every day to fight with them, and to intercept stragglers from their camp, and to carry off their horses. Then the cavaliers concerted together, and they lay in ambush one day in the road by which the Moors were accustomed to sally forth, and when the Moors had partly passed their ambush, they rushed forth and fell upon them, and killed and captured above three hundred, and pursued the remainder to the very gates of the castle. From that time the Moors were so disheartened that they made no further sallies.

Shortly after, the Master of Santiago receiving secret intelligence that a Moorish sea-captain had passed from Seville to Triana, on his way to succor the castle of Aznal Farache, placed himself, with a number of chosen cava-

liers, in ambuscade at a pass by which the Moors were expected to come. After waiting a long time, their scouts brought word that the Moors had taken another road, and were nearly at the foot of the hill on which stood the castle. "Cavaliers," cried the master, "it is not too late; let us first use our spurs and then our weapons, and if our steeds prove good, the day will yet be ours." So saying, he put spurs to his horse, and the rest following his example, they soon came in sight of the Moors. The latter, seeing the Christians coming after them full speed, urged their horses up the hill towards the castle, but the Christians overtook them and slew seven of those in the rear. In the skirmish, Garci Perez struck the Moorish captain from his horse with a blow of his lance. The Christians rushed forward to take him prisoner. On seeing this, the Moors turned back, threw themselves between their commander and his assailants, and kept the latter in check while he was conveyed into the castle. Several of them fell, covered with wounds; the residue, seeing their chieftain safe, turned their reins and galloped for the castle, just entering in time to have the gates closed upon their pursuers.

Time and space permit not to recount the

many other valorous deeds of Don Pelayo Correa, the good Master of Santiago, and his band of cavaliers and monks. His little camp became a terror to the neighborhood, and checked the sallies of the Moorish mountaineers from the Sierra Morena. In one of his enterprises he gained a signal advantage over the foe, but the approach of night threatened to defraud him of his victory. Then the pious warrior lifted up his voice and supplicated the Virgin Mary in those celebrated words, *Santa Maria, deten tu dia* (Holy Mary, detain thy day), for it was one of the days consecrated to the Virgin. The blessed Virgin listened to the prayer of her valiant votary; the daylight continued in a supernatural manner, until the victory of the good Master of Santiago was completed. In honor of this signal favor, he afterwards erected a temple to the Virgin by the name of Nuestra Señora de Tentudia.*

If any one should doubt this miracle, wrought in favor of this pious warrior and his soldiers of the cowl, it may be sufficient to relate another, which immediately succeeded, and which shows how peculiarly he was under the favor of Heaven. After the battle was over, his followers were ready to faint with thirst, and could find no stream or fountain;

* Zuniga, *Annales de Sevilla*, l. 1.

and when the good master saw the distress of his soldiers, his heart was touched with compassion, and, bethinking himself of the miracle performed by Moses, in an impulse of holy zeal and confidence, and in the name of the blessed Virgin, he struck a dry and barren rock with his lance, and instantly there gushed forth a fountain of water, at which all his Christian soldiery drank and were refreshed.* So much at present for the good Master of Santiago, Don Pelayo Correa.

* Jacob Paranes, *Lib. de los Maestros de St. Iago. Corona Gotica*, t. 3, § xiii. Zuniga, *Annales de Sevilla.*

Chapter XV.

King Fernando Changes his Camp—Garci Perez and the Seven Moors.

KING FERNANDO the Saint soon found his encampment on the banks of the Guadalquivir too much exposed to the sudden sallies and insults of the Moors. As the land was level, they easily scoured the fields, carried off horses and stragglers from the camp, and kept it in continual alarm. He drew off, therefore, to a securer place, called Tablada, the same where at present is situated the hermitage of Nuestra Señora de el Balme. Here he had a profound ditch digged all round the camp, to shut up the passes from the Moorish cavalry. He appointed patrols of horsemen also, completely armed, who continually made the rounds of the camp, in successive bands, at all hours of the day and night.*

* *Corona Gotica*, t. 3, § viii.

In a little while his army was increased by the arrival of troops from all parts,—nobles, cavaliers, and rich men, with their retainers,—nor were there wanting holy prelates, who assumed the warrior, and brought large squadrons of well-armed vassals to the army. Merchants and artificers now daily arrived, and wandering minstrels, and people of all sorts, and the camp appeared like a warlike city, where rich and sumptuous merchandise was mingled with the splendor of arms; and the various colors of the tents and pavilions, and the fluttering standards and pennons bearing the painted devices of the proudest houses of Spain, were gay and glorious to behold.

When the king had established the camp in Tablada he ordered that every day the foragers should sally forth in search of provisions and provender, guarded by strong bodies of troops. The various chiefs of the army took turns to command the guard who escorted the foragers. One day it was the turn of Garci Perez, the same cavalier who had killed the king of the Azules. He was a hardy, iron warrior, seasoned and scarred in warfare, and renowned among both Moors and Christians for his great prowess, his daring courage, and his coolness in the midst of danger. Garci Perez had lingered in the camp until some time after the

foragers had departed, who were already out of sight. He at length set out to join them, accompanied by another cavalier. They had not proceeded far before they perceived seven Moorish *genetes*, or light-horsemen, directly in their road. When the companion of Garci Perez beheld such a formidable array of foes, he paused and said: "Señor Perez, let us return; the Moors are seven and we but two, and there is no law in the *duello* which obliges us to make front against such fearful odds."

To this Garci Perez replied: "Señor, forward, always forward; let us continue on our road; those Moors will never wait for us." The other cavalier, however, exclaimed against such rashness, and turning the reins of his horse, returned as privately as possible to the camp, and hastened to his tent.

All this happened within sight of the camp. The king was at the door of his royal tent, which stood on a rising ground and overlooked the place where this occurred. When the king saw one cavalier return and the other continue, notwithstanding that there were seven Moors in the road, he ordered that some horsemen should ride forth to his aid.

Upon this Don Lorenzo Xuarez, who was with the king and had seen Garci Perez sally forth from the camp, said: "Your majesty

may leave that cavalier to himself; that is Garci Perez, and he has no need of aid against seven Moors. If the Moors know him they will not meddle with him; and if they do, your majesty will see what kind of a cavalier he is."

They continued to watch the cavalier, who rode on tranquilly as if in no apprehension. When he drew nigh to the Moors, who were drawn up on each side of the road, he took his arms from his squire and ordered him not to separate from him. As he was lacing his *morion*, an embroidered cap which he wore on his head fell to the ground without his perceiving it. Having laced the *capellina*, he continued on his way, and his squire after him. When the Moors saw him near by they knew by his arms that it was Garci Perez, and bethinking them of his great renown for terrible deeds in arms, they did not dare to attack him, but went along the road even with him, he on one side, they on the other, making menaces.

Garci Perez went on his road with great serenity, without making any movement. When the Moors saw that he heeded not their menaces, they turned round and went back to about the place where he dropped his cap.

Having arrived at some distance from the Moors, he took off his arms to return them to

his squire, and unlacing the *capellina*, found that the cap was wanting. He asked the squire for it, but the latter knew nothing about it. Seeing that it had fallen, he again demanded his arms of the squire, and returned in search of it, telling his squire to keep close behind him and look out well for it. The squire remonstrated. "What, señor," said he, "will you return and place yourself in such great trouble for a mere *capa?* Have you not already done enough for your honor, in passing so daringly by seven Moors, and have you not been singularly favored by fortune in escaping unhurt, and do you seek again to tempt fortune for a cap?"

"Say no more," replied Garci Perez; "that cap was worked for me by a fair lady; I hold it of great value. Besides, dost thou not see that I have not a head to be without a cap?" alluding to the baldness of his head, which had no hair in front. So saying, he tranquilly returned towards the Moors. When Don Lorenzo Xuarez saw this, he said to the king: "Behold! your majesty, how Garci Perez turns upon the Moors; since they will not make an attack, he means to attack them. Now your majesty will see the noble valor of this cavalier, if the Moors dare to await him." When the Moors beheld Garci Perez approach-

ing they thought he meant to assault them, and drew off, not daring to encounter him. When Don Lorenzo saw this he exclaimed: "Behold! your majesty, the truth of what I told you. These Moors dare not wait for him. I know well the valor of Garci Perez, and it appears the Moors are aware of it likewise."

In the meantime Garci Perez came to the place where the *capa* had fallen, and beheld it upon the earth. Then he ordered his squire to dismount and pick it up, and putting it deliberately on his head, he continued on his way to the foragers.

When he returned to the camp from guarding the foragers, Don Lorenzo asked him, in presence of the king, who was the cavalier who had set out with him from the camp, but had turned back on sight of the Moors; he replied that he did not know him, and he was confused, for he perceived that the king had witnessed what had passed, and he was so modest withal, that he was ever embarrassed when his deeds were praised in his presence.

Don Lorenzo repeatedly asked him who was the recreant cavalier, but he always replied that he did not know, although he knew full well and saw him daily in the camp. But he was too generous to say anything that should

take away the fame of another, and he charged his squire that never, by word or look, he should betray the secret; so that, though inquiries were often made, the name of that cavalier was never discovered.

Chapter XVI.

Of the Raft Built by the Moors, and how it was Boarded by Admiral Bonifaz—Destruction of the Moorish Fleet—Succor from Africa.

WHILE the army of King Fernando the Saint harassed the city by land and cut off its supplies, the bold Bonifaz, with his fleet, shut up the river, prevented all succor from Africa, and menaced to attack the bridge between Triana and Seville, by which the city derived its sustenance from the opposite country. The Moors saw their peril. If this pass were destroyed, famine must be the consequence, and the multitude of their soldiers, on which at present they relied for safety, would then become the cause of their destruction.

So the Moors devised a machine by which they hoped to sweep the river and involve the invading fleet in ruin. They made a raft so wide that it reached from one bank to the other, and they placed all round it pots and vessels

filled with resin, pitch, tar, and other combustibles, forming what is called Greek fire, and upon it was a great number of armed men; and on each shore—from the castle of Triana on the one side, and from the city on the other—sallied forth legions of troops to advance at the same time with the raft. The raft was preceded by several vessels well armed, to attack the Christian ships, while the soldiers on the raft should hurl on board their pots of fire; and at length, setting all the combustibles in a blaze, should send the raft flaming into the midst of the hostile fleet, and wrap it in one general conflagration.

When everything was prepared, the Moors set off by land and water, confident of success. But they proceeded in a wild, irregular manner, shouting and sounding drums and trumpets, and began to attack the Christian ships fiercely, but without concert, hurling their pots of fire from a distance, filling the air with smoke, but falling short of their enemy. The tumultuous uproar of their preparations had put all the Christians on their guard. The bold Bonifaz waited not to be assailed; he boarded the raft, attacked vigorously its defenders, put many of them to the sword, and drove the rest into the water, and succeeded in extinguishing the Greek fire. He then encountered the ships of war, grappling them and fighting hand to hand

from ship to ship. The action was furious and bloody, and lasted all day. Many were cut down in flight, many fell into the water, and many in despair threw themselves in and were drowned.

The battle had raged no less furiously upon the land. On the side of Seville, the troops had issued from the camp of King Fernando, while on the opposite shore the brave Master of Santiago, Don Pelayo Perez Correa, with his warriors and fighting friars, had made short work with the enemy. In this way a triple battle was carried on: there was the rush of squadrons, the clash of arms, and the din of drums and trumpets on either bank, while the river was covered with vessels, tearing each other to pieces, as it were, their crews fighting in the midst of flame and smoke, the waves red with blood and filled with the bodies of the slain. At length the Christians were victorious; most of the enemies' vessels were taken or destroyed, and on either shore the Moors, broken and discomfited, fled,—those on the one side for the gates of Seville, and those on the other for the castle of Triana,—pursued with great slaughter by the victors.

Notwithstanding the great destruction of their fleet, the Moors soon renewed their attempts upon the ships of Ramon Bonifaz, for they knew that the salvation of the city

required the freedom of the river. Succor arrived from Africa, of ships, with troops and provisions; they rebuilt the fire-ships which had been destroyed, and incessant combats, feints, and stratagems took place daily, both on land and water. The admiral stood in great dread of the Greek fire used by the Moors. He caused large stakes of wood to be placed in the river, to prevent the passage of the fire-ships. This for some time was of avail; but the Moors, watching an opportunity when the sentinels were asleep, came and threw cables round the stakes, and fastening the other ends to their vessels, made all sail, and, by the help of wind and oars, tore away the stakes and carried them off with shouts of triumph. The clamorous exultation of the Moors betrayed them. The Admiral Bonifaz was aroused. With a few of the lightest of his vessels he immediately pursued the enemy. He came upon them so suddenly that they were too much bewildered either to fight or fly. Some threw themselves into the waves in affright; others attempted to make resistance and were cut down. The admiral took four barks laden with arms and provisions, and with these returned in triumph to his fleet.*

* *Cronica Gotica*, l. 3, § 13. *Cronica General*, pt. 4. *Cronica del Santo Rey*, c. 55.

Chapter XVII.

Of the Stout Prior, Ferran Ruyz, and how he Rescued his Cattle from the Moors—Further Enterprises of the Prior, and of the Ambuscade into which he Fell.

IT happened one day that a great part of the cavaliers of the army were absent, some making *cavalgadas* about the country, others guarding the foragers, and others gone to receive the Prince Alfonso, who was on his way to the camp from Murcia. At this time ten Moorish cavaliers, of the brave lineage of the Azules, finding the Christian camp but thinly peopled, came prowling about, seeking where they might make a bold inroad. As they were on the lookout they came to that part of the camp where were the tents of the stout Friar Ferran Ruyz, prior of the hospital. The stout prior and his fighting brethren, were as good at foraging as fighting. Around their quarters there were several sleek cows grazing,

which they had carried off from the Moors. When the Azules saw these, they thought to make a good prize, and to bear off the prior's cattle as a trophy. Careering lightly round, therefore, between the cattle and the camp, they began to drive them towards the city. The alarm was given in the camp, and six sturdy friars sallied forth, on foot, with two cavaliers, in pursuit of the marauders. The prior himself was roused by the noise; when he heard that the beeves of the Church were in danger his ire was kindled; and buckling on his armor, he mounted his steed and galloped furiously to the aid of his valiant friars, and the rescue of his cattle. The Moors attempted to urge on the lagging and full-fed kine, but finding the enemy close upon them, they were obliged to abandon their spoil among the olive-trees, and to retreat. The prior then gave the cattle in charge to a squire, to drive them back to the camp. He would have returned himself, but his friars had continued on for some distance. The stout prior, therefore, gave spurs to his horse and galloped beyond them, to turn them back. Suddenly great shouts and cries arose before and behind him, and an ambuscade of Moors, both horse and foot, came rushing out of a ravine. The stout Prior of San Juan saw that there was no re-

treat; and he disdained to render himself a prisoner. Commending himself to his patron saint, and bracing his shield, he charged bravely among the Moors, and began to lay about him with a holy zeal of spirit and a vigorous arm of flesh. Every blow that he gave was in the name of San Juan, and every blow laid an infidel in the dust. His friars, seeing the peril of their leader, came running to his aid, accompanied by a number of cavaliers. They rushed into the fight, shouting, "San Juan! San Juan!" and began to deal such sturdy blows as savored more of the camp than of the cloister. Great and fierce was this struggle between cowl and turban. The ground was strewn with bodies of the infidels; but the Christians were a mere handful among a multitude. A burly friar, commander of Sietefilla, was struck to the earth, and his shaven head cleft by a blow of a scimeitar; several squires and cavaliers, to the number of twenty, fell covered with wounds; yet still the stout prior and his brethren continued fighting with desperate fury, shouting incessantly, "San Juan! San Juan!" and dealing their blows with as good heart as they had ever dealt benedictions on their followers.

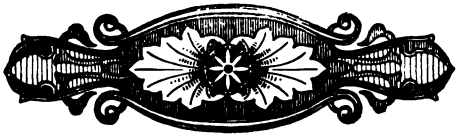
The noise of this skirmish, and the holy shouts of the fighting friars, resounded through

the camp. The alarm was given: "The Prior of San Juan is surrounded by the enemy! To the rescue! to the rescue!" The whole Christian host was in agitation, but none were so alert as those holy warriors of the Church, Don Garcia, Bishop of Cordova, and Don Sancho, Bishop of Coria. Hastily summoning their vassals, horse and foot, they bestrode their steeds, with cuirass over cassock, and lance instead of crosier, and set off at full gallop to the rescue of their brother saints. When the Moors saw the warrior bishops and their retainers scouring to the field, they gave over the contest, and leaving the prior and his companions, they drew off towards the city. Their retreat was soon changed to a headlong flight; for the bishops, not content with rescuing the prior, continued in pursuit of his assailants. The Moorish foot-soldiers were soon overtaken and either slaughtered or made prisoners; nor did the horsemen make good their retreat into the city until the powerful arm of the Church had visited their rear with pious vengeance.* Nor did the chastisement of Heaven end here. The stout prior of the hospital, being once aroused, was full of ardor and enterprise. Concerting with the Prince Don Enrique, and the Masters of Calatrava and Al-

* *Cronica General*, pt. 4, p. 338.

cantara, and the valiant Lorenzo Xuarez, they made a sudden assault by night on the suburb of Seville called Benaljofar, and broke their way into it with fire and sword. The Moors were roused from their sleep by the flames of their dwellings and the shouts of the Christians. There was hard and bloody fighting. The prior of the hospital, with his valiant friars, was in the fiercest of the action, and their war-cry of "San Juan! San Juan!" was heard in all parts of the suburb. Many houses were burnt, many sacked, many Moors slain or taken prisoners, and the Christian knights and warrior friars, having gathered together a great *cavalgada* of the flocks and herds which were in the suburb, drove it off in triumph to the camp, by the light of the blazing dwellings.

A like inroad was made by the prior and the same cavaliers, a few nights afterwards, into the suburb called Macarena, which they laid waste in like manner, bearing off wealthy spoils. Such was the pious vengeance which the Moors brought upon themselves by meddling with the kine of the stout prior of the hospital.



Chapter XVIII.

Bravado of the Three Cavaliers—Ambush at the Bridge over the Guadayra—Desperate Valor of Garci Perez—Grand Attempt of Admiral Bonifaz on the Bridge of Boats—Seville Dismembered from Triana.

OF all the Christian cavaliers who distinguished themselves in this renowned siege of Seville, there was none who surpassed in valor the bold Garci Perez de Vargas. This hardy knight was truly enamoured of danger, and like a gamester with his gold, he seemed to have no pleasure of his life except in putting it in constant jeopardy. One of the greatest friends of Garci Perez was Don Lorenzo Xuarez Gallinato, the same who had boasted of the valor of Garci Perez at the time that he exposed himself to be attacked by seven Moorish horsemen. They were not merely companions, but rivals in arms; for in this siege it was the custom

among the Christian knights to vie with each other in acts of daring enterprise.

One morning, as Garci Perez, Don Lorenzo Xuarez, and a third cavalier, named Alfonso Tello, were on horseback, patrolling the skirts of the camp, a friendly contest rose between them as to who was most adventurous in arms. To settle the question, it was determined to put the proof to the Moors, by going alone and striking the points of their lances in the gate of the city.

No sooner was this mad bravado agreed upon than they turned the reins of their horses and made for Seville. The Moorish sentinels, from the towers of the gate, saw three Christian knights advancing over the plain, and supposed them to be messengers or deserters from the army. When the cavaliers drew near, each struck his lance against the gate, and wheeling round, put spurs to his horse and retreated. The Moors, considering this a scornful defiance, were violently exasperated, and sallied forth in great numbers to revenge the insult. They soon were hard on the traces of the Christian cavaliers. The first who turned to fight with them was Alfonso Tello, being of a fiery and impatient spirit. The second was Garci Perez ; the third was Don Lorenzo, who waited until the Moors came up with them,

when he braced his shield, couched his lance, and took the whole brunt of their charge. A desperate fight took place, for though the Moors were overwhelming in number, the cavaliers were three of the most valiant warriors in Spain. The conflict was beheld from the camp. The alarm was given; the Christian cavaliers hastened to the rescue of their companions in arms; squadron after squadron pressed to the field, the Moors poured out reinforcements from the gate; in this way a general battle ensued, which lasted a great part of the day, until the Moors were vanquished and driven within their walls.

There was one of the gates of Seville, called the gate of the Alcazar, which led out to a small bridge over the Guadayra. Out of this gate the Moors used to make frequent sallies, to fall suddenly upon the Christian camp, or to sweep off the flocks and herds about its outskirts, and then to scour back to the bridge, beyond which it was dangerous to pursue them.

The defense of this part of the camp was intrusted to those two valiant compeers in arms, Garci Perez de Vargas and Don Lorenzo Xuarez; and they determined to take ample revenge upon the Moors for all the depredations they had committed. They chose, therefore, about two hundred hardy cavaliers, the

flower of those seasoned warriors on the opposite side of the Guadalquivir, who formed the little army of the good Master of Santiago. When they were all assembled together, Don Lorenzo put them in ambush, in the way by which the Moors were accustomed to pass in their maraudings, and he instructed them, in pursuing the Moors, to stop at the bridge, and by no means to pass beyond it; for between it and the city there was a great host of the enemy, and the bridge was so narrow that to retreat over it would be perilous in the extreme. This order was given to all, but was particularly intended for Garci Perez, to restrain his daring spirit, which was ever apt to run into peril.

They had not been long in ambush when they heard the distant tramp of the enemy upon the bridge, and found that the Moors were upon the forage. They kept concealed, and the Moors passed by them in careless and irregular manner, as men apprehending no danger. Scarce had they gone by when the cavaliers rushed forth, charged into the midst of them, and threw them all into confusion. Many were killed or overthrown in the shock, the rest took to flight, and made at full speed for the bridge. Most of the Christian soldiers, according to orders, stopped at the bridge; but Don Lorenzo,

with a few of his cavaliers, followed the enemy half-way across, making great havoc in that narrow pass. Many of the Moors, in their panic, flung themselves from the bridge, and perished in the Guadayra; others were cut down and trampled under the hoofs of friends and foes. Don Lorenzo, in the heat of the fight, cried aloud incessantly, defying the Moors, and proclaiming his name: "Turn hither! turn hither! 'T is I, Lorenzo Xuarez!" But few of the Moors cared to look him in the face.

Don Lorenzo now returned to his cavaliers, but on looking round, Garci Perez was not to be seen. All were dismayed, fearing some evil fortune had befallen him; when, on casting their eyes beyond the bridge, they saw him on the opposite side, surrounded by Moors and fighting with desperate valor.

"Garci Perez has deceived us," said Don Lorenzo, "and has passed the bridge, contrary to agreement. But to the rescue, comrades! never let it be said that so good a cavalier as Garci Perez was lost for want of our assistance." So saying, they all put spurs to their horses, rushed again upon the bridge, and broke their way across, cutting down and overturning the Moors, and driving great numbers to fling themselves into the river. When the Moors who

had surrounded Garci Perez saw this band of cavaliers rushing from the bridge, they turned to defend themselves. The contest was fierce, but broken ; many of the Moors took refuge in the river, but the Christians followed and slew them among the waves. They continued fighting for the remainder of the day, quite up to the gate of the Alcazar ; and if the chronicles of the times speak with their usual veracity, full three thousand infidels bit the dust on that occasion. When Don Lorenzo returned to the camp, and was in presence of the king and of numerous cavaliers, great encomiums were passed upon his valor ; but he modestly replied that Garci Perez had that day made them good soldiers by force.

From that time forward the Moors attempted no further inroads into the camp, so severe a lesson had they received from these brave cavaliers.*

The city of Seville was connected with the suburb of Triana by a strong bridge of boats, fastened together by massive chains of iron. By this bridge a constant communication was kept up between Triana and the city, and mutual aid and support passed and repassed.

* *Cronica General de España*, pt. 4. *Cronica del Rey Fernando el Santo*, c. 60. *Corona Gotica*, t. 3, p. 126.

While this bridge remained, it was impossible to complete the investment of the city, or to capture the castle of Triana.

The bold Admiral Bonifaz at length conceived a plan to break this bridge asunder, and thus to cut off all communication between the city and Triana. No sooner had this idea entered his mind than he landed, and proceeded with great speed to the royal tent, to lay it before the king. Then a consultation was summoned by the king of ancient mariners and artificers of ships, and other persons learned in maritime affairs; and after Admiral Bonifaz had propounded his plan, it was thought to be good, and all preparations were made to carry it into effect. The admiral took two of his largest and strongest ships, and fortified them at the prows with solid timber and with plates of iron; and he put within them a great number of chosen men, well armed and provided with everything for attack and defense. Of one he took the command himself. It was the third day of May, the day of the most Holy Cross, that he chose for this grand and perilous attempt; and the pious King Fernando, to insure success, ordered that a cross should be carried as a standard at the masthead of each ship.

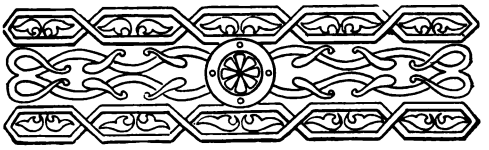
On the third of May, towards the hour

of noon, the two ships descended the Guadalquivir for some distance, to gain room to come up with the greater violence. Here they waited the rising of the tide, and as soon as it was in full force, and a favorable wind had sprung up from the sea, they hoisted anchor, spread all sail, and put themselves in the midst of the current. The whole shores were lined on each side with Christian troops, watching the event with great anxiety. The king and the Prince Alfonso, with their warriors, on the one side had drawn close to the city to prevent the sallying forth of the Moors, while the good Master of Santiago, Don Pelayo Perez Correa, kept watch upon the gates of Triana. The Moors crowded the tops of their towers, their walls, and house-tops, and prepared engines and weapons of all kinds to overwhelm the ships with destruction.

Twice the bold admiral set all sail and started on his career, and twice the wind died away before he had proceeded half his course. Shouts of joy and derision rose from the walls and towers of Seville, while the warriors in the ships began to fear that their attempt would be unsuccessful. At length a fresh and strong wind arose that swelled every sail and sent the ships ploughing up the waves of the Guadalquivir. A dead silence prevailed among the

hosts on either bank, even the Moors remained silent, in fixed and breathless suspense. When the ships arrived within reach of the walls of the city and the suburbs, a tremendous attack was commenced from every wall and tower; great engines discharged stones and offensive weapons of all kinds, and flaming pots of Greek fire. On the tower of gold were stationed catapults and vast cross-bows that were worked with cranks, and from hence an iron shower was rained upon the ships. The Moors in Triana were equally active; from every wall and turret, from house-tops, and from the banks of the river, an incessant assault was kept up with catapults, cross-bows, slings, darts, and everything that could annoy. Through all this tempest of war, the ships kept on their course. The first ship which arrived struck the bridge on the part towards Triana. The shock resounded from shore to shore, the whole fabric trembled, the ship recoiled and reeled, but the bridge was unbroken; and shouts of joy rose from the Moors on each side of the river. Immediately after came the ship of the admiral. It struck the bridge just about the centre with a tremendous crash. The iron chains which bound the boats together snapped as if they had been flax. The boats were crushed and shattered and flung wide asunder,

and the ship of the admiral proceeded in triumph through the open space. No sooner did the king and the Prince Alfonso see the success of the admiral, than they pressed with their troops closely round the city, and prevented the Moors from sallying forth; while the ships, having accomplished their enterprise, extricated themselves from their dangerous situation, and returned in triumph to their accustomed anchorage. This was the fatal blow that dismembered Seville from Triana, and insured the downfall of the city.



Chapter XIX.

Investment of Triana—Garci Perez and the Infanzon.

ON the day after the breaking of the bridge, the king, the Prince Alfonso, the Prince Enrique, the various masters of the orders, and a great part of the army, crossed the Guadalquivir and commenced an attack on Triana, while the bold Admiral Bonifaz approached with his ships and assaulted the place from the water. But the Christian army was unprovided with ladders or machines for the attack, and fought to great disadvantage. The Moors, from the safe shelter of their walls and towers, rained a shower of missiles of all kinds. As they were so high above the Christians, their arrows, darts, and lances came with the greater force. They were skilful with the cross-bow, and had engines of such force that the darts which they discharged would sometimes pass through a cavalier all armed, and bury themselves in the earth.*

* *Cronica General*, pt. 4, p. 341.

The very women combated from the walls, and hurled down stones that crushed the warriors beneath.

While the army was closely investing Triana, and fierce encounters were daily taking place between Moor and Christian, there arrived at the camp a youthful Infanzon, or noble, of proud lineage. He brought with him a shining train of vassals, all newly armed and appointed, and his own armor, all fresh and lustrous, showed none of the dents and bruises and abuses of the war. As this gay and gorgeous cavalier was patrolling the camp, with several cavaliers, he beheld Garci Perez pass by, in armor and accoutrements all worn and soiled by the hard service he had performed, and he saw a similar device to his own, of white waves, emblazoned on the scutcheon of this unknown warrior. Then the nobleman was highly ruffled and incensed, and he exclaimed. "How is this? who is this sorry cavalier that dares to bear these devices? By my faith, he must either give them up or show his reasons for usurping them." The other cavaliers exclaimed: "Be cautious how you speak; this is Garci Perez; a braver cavalier wears not sword in Spain. For all he goes thus modestly and quietly about, he is a very lion in the field, nor does he assume anything that he cannot well

maintain. Should he hear this which you have said, trust us he would not rest quiet until he had terrible satisfaction."

Now so it happened that certain mischief-makers carried word to Garci Perez of what the nobleman had said, expecting to see him burst into fierce indignation, and defy the other to the field. But Garci Perez remained tranquil, and said not a word.

Within a day or two after, there was a sally from the castle of Triana and a hot skirmish between the Moors and Christians; and Garci Perez and the Infanzon and a number of cavaliers pursued the Moors up to the barriers of the castle. Here the enemy rallied and made a fierce defense, and killed several of the cavaliers. But Garci Perez put spurs to his horse, and, couching his lance, charged among the thickest of the foes, and, followed by a handful of his companions, drove the Moors to the very gates of Triana. The Moors, seeing how few were their pursuers turned upon them, and dealt bravely with sword and lance and mace, while stones and darts and arrows were rained down from the towers above the gates. At length the Moors took refuge within the walls, leaving the field to the victorious cavaliers. Garci Perez drew off coolly and calmly amidst a shower of missiles

from the wall. He came out of the battle with his armor all battered and defaced; his helmet bruised, the crest broken off, and his buckler so dented and shattered that the device could scarcely be perceived. On returning to the barrier, he found there the Infanzon, with his armor all uninjured, and his armorial bearing as fresh as if just emblazoned, for the vaunting warrior had not ventured beyond the barrier. Then Garci Perez drew near to the Infanzon, and eying him from head to foot, "Señor cavalier," he said, "you may well dispute my right to wear this honorable device in my shield, since you see I take so little care of it that it is almost destroyed. You, on the other hand, are worthy of bearing it. You are the guardian angel of honor, since you guard it so carefully as to put it to no risk. I will only observe to you that the sword kept in the scabbard rusts, and the valor that is never put to the proof becomes sullied."*

At these words the Infanzon was deeply humiliated, for he saw that Garci Perez had heard of his empty speeches, and he felt how unworthily he had spoken of so valiant and magnanimous a cavalier. "Señor cavalier," he said, "pardon my ignorance and presumption; you alone are worthy of bearing those

* *Cronica General*, pt. 4. *Corona Gotica*, t. 3, § 16.

arms, for you derive not nobility from them, but ennoble them by your glorious deeds."

Then Garci Perez blushed at the praises he had thus drawn upon himself, and he regretted the harshness of his words toward the Infanzon, and he not merely pardoned him all that had passed, but gave him his hand in pledge of amity, and from that time they were close friends and companions in arms.*

* *Cronica General*, pt. 4. *Cronica del Rey Santo. Corona Gotica*, t. 3, § 16.

Chapter XX.

Capitulation of Seville—Dispersion of the Moorish Inhabitants—Triumphant Entry of King Fernando.

ABOUT this time there arrived in Seville a Moorish *alfaqui*, named Orias, with a large company of warriors, who came to this war as if performing a pilgrimage, for it was considered a holy war no less by infidels than Christians. This Orias was of a politic and crafty nature, and he suggested to the commander of Seville a stratagem by which they might get Prince Alfonso in their power, and compel King Fernando to raise the siege by way of ransom. The counsel of Orias was adopted, after a consultation with the principal cavaliers, and measures taken to carry it into execution; a Moor was sent, therefore, as if secretly and by stealth, to Prince Alfonso, and offered to put him in possession of two towers of the wall, if he would

come in person to receive them, which towers once in his possession, it would be easy to overpower the city.

Prince Alfonso listened to the envoy with seeming eagerness, but suspected some deceit, and thought it unwise to put his person in such jeopardy. Lest, however, there should be truth in his proposals, a party of chosen cavaliers were sent as if to take possession of the towers, and with them was Don Pero Nuñez de Guzman, disguised as the prince.

When they came to the place where the Moors had appointed to meet them, they beheld a party of infidels strongly armed, who advanced with sinister looks, and attempted to surround Don Nuñez, but he, being on his guard, put spurs to his horse, and, breaking through the midst of them, escaped. His companions followed his example, all but one, who was struck from his horse and cut to pieces by the Moors.*

Just after this event there arrived a great reinforcement to the camp from the city of Cordova, bringing provisions and various munitions of war. Finding his army thus increased, the king had a consultation with Admiral Bonifaz, and determined completely to cut off all communication between Seville

* *Cronica General*, pt. 4, p. 424.

and Triana, for the Moors still crossed the river occasionally by fording. When they were about to carry their plan into effect, the crafty Alfaqui Orias crossed to Triana, accompanied by a number of Ganzules. He was charged with instructions to the garrison, and to concert some mode of reuniting their forces, or of effecting some blow upon the Christian camp; for unless they could effect a union and co-operation, it would be impossible to make much longer resistance.

Scarce had Orias passed, when the Christian sentinels gave notice. Upon this, a detachment of the Christian army immediately crossed and took possession of the opposite shore, and Admiral Bonifaz stationed his fleet in the middle of the river. Thus the return of Orias was prevented, and all intercourse between the places, even by messenger, completely interrupted. The city and Triana were now severally attacked, and unable to render each other assistance. The Moors were daily diminishing in number; many slain in battle, many taken captive, and many dying of hunger and disease. The Christian forces were daily augmenting, and were animated by continual success, whereas mutiny and sedition began to break out among the inhabitants of the city. The Moorish commander, Axataf,

therefore, seeing all further resistance vain, sent ambassadors to capitulate with King Fernando. It was a hard and humiliating struggle to resign this fair city, the queen of Andalusia, the seat of Moorish sway and splendor, and which had been under Moorish domination ever since the Conquest.

The valiant Axataf endeavored to make various conditions; that King Fernando should raise the siege on receiving the tribute which had hitherto been paid to the *miramamolin*. This being peremptorily refused, he offered to give up a third of the city, and then half, building at his own cost a wall to divide the Moorish part from the Christian. King Fernando, however, would listen to no such terms. He demanded the entire surrender of the place, with the exception of the persons and effects of the inhabitants, and permitting the commander to retain possession of St. Lucar, Aznal Farache, and Niebla. The commander of Seville saw the sword suspended over his head, and had to submit; the capitulations of the surrender were signed, when Axataf made one last request, that he might be permitted to demolish the grand mosque and the principal tower (or *giralda*) of the city.* He felt that these would remain perpetual monuments of

* Mariana, l. 13, c. 7.

his disgrace. The Prince Alfonso was present when this last demand was made, and his father looked at him significantly, as if he desired the reply to come from his lips. The prince rose indignantly and exclaimed, that if there should be a single tile missing from the temple, or a single brick from the tower, it should be paid by so many lives that the streets of Seville should run with blood. The Moors were silenced by this reply, and prepared with heavy hearts to fulfil the capitulation. One month was allowed them for the purpose, the *alcazar*, or citadel, of Seville being given up to the Christians as a security.

On the twenty-third day of November this important fortress was surrendered, after a siege of eighteen months. A deputation of the principal Moors came forth and presented King Fernando with the keys of the city; at the same time the *aljamia*, or council of the Jews, presented him with the key of Jewry, the quarter of the city which they inhabited. This key was notable for its curious workmanship. It was formed of all kinds of metals. The guards of it were wrought into letters, bearing the following signification: "God will open—the king will enter." On the ring was inscribed in Hebrew: "The King of kings will enter; all the world will behold

him." This key is still preserved in the cathedral of Seville, in the place where repose the remains of the sainted King Fernando.*

During the month of grace the Moors sold such of their effects as they could not carry with them, and the king provided vessels for such as chose to depart for Africa. Upwards of one hundred thousand, it is said, were thus convoyed by Admiral Bonifaz, while upwards of two hundred thousand dispersed themselves throughout such of the territory of Andalusia as still remained in possession of the Moors.

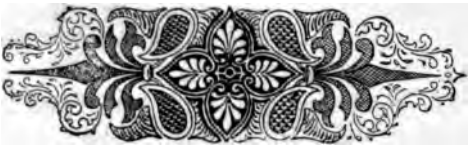
When the month was expired, and the city was evacuated by its Moorish inhabitants, King Fernando the Saint entered in solemn triumph, in a grand religious and military procession. There were all the captains and cavaliers of the army, in shining armor, with the prelates, and masters of the religious and military orders, and the nobility of Castile Leon, and Aragon, in their richest apparel. The streets resounded with the swelling notes

* In Castile, whenever the kings entered any place where there was a synagogue, the Jews assembled in council and paid to the Monteros, or bull-fighters, twelve maravedis each, to guard them, that they should receive no harm from the Christians; being held in such contempt and odium, that it was necessary they should be under the safeguard of the king, not to be injured or insulted.—Zuniga, *Annales de Sevilla.*

of martial music and with the joyous acclamations of the multitude.

In the midst of the procession was the venerable effigy of the most Holy Mary, on a triumphal car of silver, wrought with admirable skill; and immediately after followed the pious king, with a drawn sword in his hand, and on his left was Prince Alfonso and the other princes.

The procession advanced to the principal mosque, which had been purified and consecrated as a Christian temple, where the triumphal car of the Holy Virgin was placed at the grand altar. Here the pious king knelt and returned thanks to Heaven and the Virgin for this signal victory, and all present chanted *Te Deum Laudàmus.*



Chapter XXI.

Death of King Fernando.

WHEN King Fernando had regulated everything for the good government and prosperity of Seville, he sallied forth with his conquering army to subdue the surrounding country. He soon brought under subjection Xerez, Medina Sidonia, Alua, Bepel, and many other places near the sea-coast; some surrendered voluntarily, others were taken by force; he maintained a strict peace with his vassal the king of Granada, but finding not sufficient scope for his arms in Spain, and being inflamed with a holy zeal in the cause of the faith, he determined to pass over into Africa, and retaliate upon the Moslems their daring invasion of his country. For this purpose he ordered a powerful armada to be prepared in the ports of Cantabria, to be put under the command of the bold Admiral Bonifaz.

In the midst of his preparations, which spread consternation throughout Mauritania, the pious king fell dangerously ill at Seville of a dropsy. When he found his dying hour approaching, he made his death-bed confession, and requested the holy Sacrament to be administered to him. A train of bishops and other clergy, among whom was his son Philip, Archbishop of Seville, brought the Sacrament into his presence. The king rose from his bed, threw himself on his knees, with a rope round his neck and a crucifix in his hand, and poured forth his soul in penitence and prayer. Having received the *viatica* and the holy Sacrament, he commanded all ornaments of royalty to be taken from his chamber. He assembled his children round his bedside, and blessed his son the Prince Alfonso, as his first-born and the heir of his throne, giving him excellent advice for the government of his kingdom, and charging him to protect the interests of his brethren. The pious king afterwards fell into an ecstasy or trance, in which he beheld angels watching round his bed to bear his soul to heaven. He awoke from this state of heavenly rapture, and, asking for a candle, he took it in his hand and made his ultimate profession of the faith. He then requested the clergy present to repeat the litanies, and to chant the *Te Deum Laudamus*.

In chanting the first verse of the hymn, the king gently inclined his head, with perfect serenity of countenance, and rendered up his spirit. "The hymn," says the ancient chronicle, "which was begun on earth by men, was continued by the voices of angels, which were heard by all present." These doubtless were the angels whom the king in his ecstasy had beheld around his couch, who now accompanied him, in his glorious ascent to heaven, with songs of holy triumph. Nor was it in his chamber alone that these voices were heard but in all the royal *alcazars* of Seville, the sweetest voices were heard in the air and seraphic music, as of angelic choirs, at the moment that the sainted king expired.* He died on the 30th of May, the vespers of the Holy Trinity, in the year of the Incarnation one thousand two hundred and forty-two, aged seventy-three years—having reigned thirty-five years over Castile and twenty over Leon.

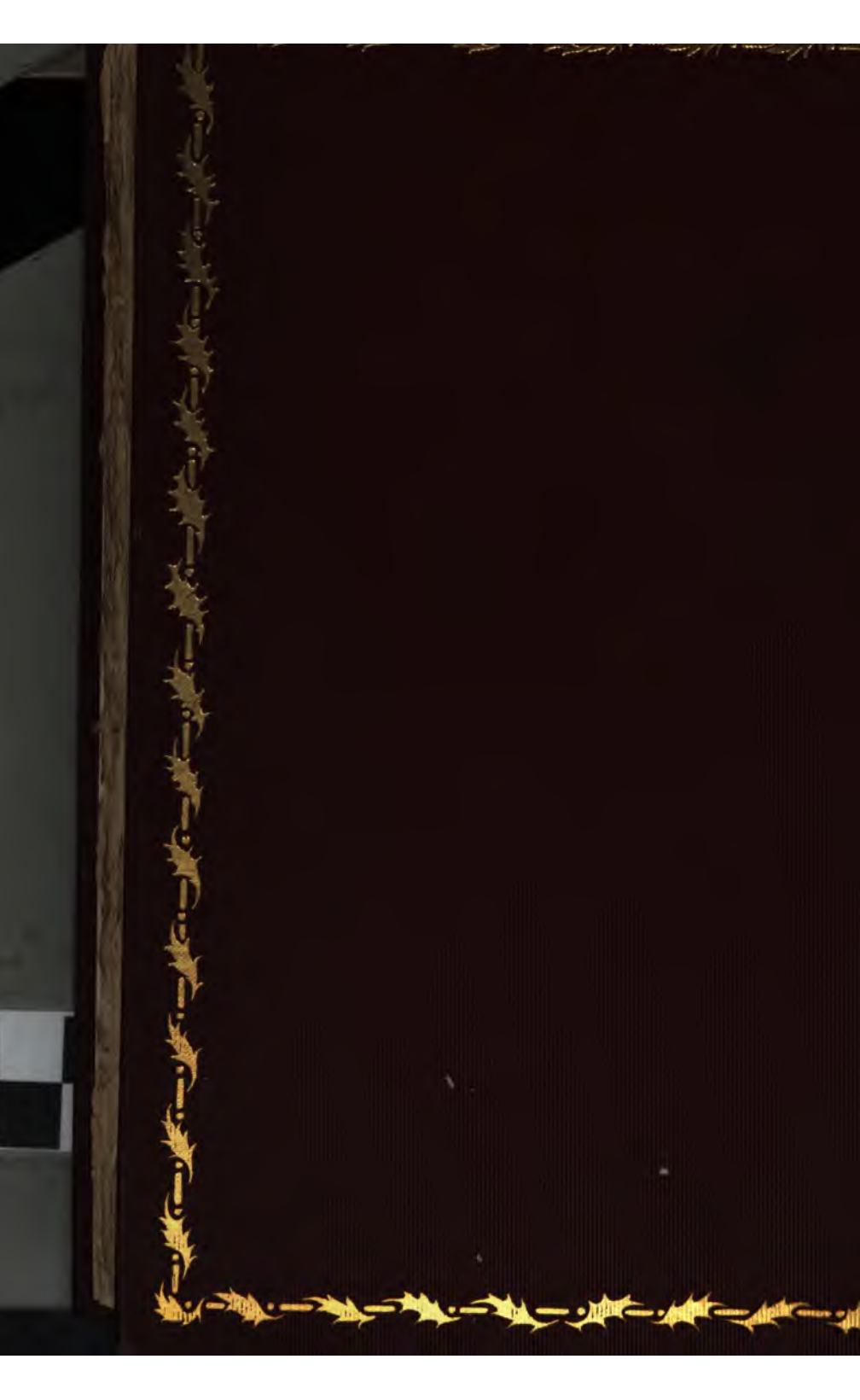
Two days after his death he was interred in his royal chapel in the Holy Church, in a sepulchre of alabaster, which still remains. It is asserted by grave authors that at the time of putting his body in the sepulchre, the choir of

* Pablo de Espinosa, *Grandesas de Sevilla*, fol. 146. *Cronica del Santo Rey*, 78. *Corona Gotica*, t. 3, p. 166.

angels again was heard chanting his eulogium, and filling the air with sweet melody in praise of his virtues.*

When Alhamar, the Moorish King of Granada, heard of his death, he caused great demonstrations of mourning to be made throughout his dominions. During his life he sent yearly a number of Moors with one hundred wax tapers, to assist at his exequies, which ceremony was observed by his successors, until the time of the conquest of Granada by Fernando the Catholic.†

* Argoti de Molina, *Nobleza de Andaluzia*, l. 1, c. 21. Tomas Bocio, *Signales de la Iglesia*, l. 29. Don Rodrigo Sanchez, Bishop of Palencia, pt. 3, c. 40.

† Pablo de Espinosa, fol. 146.

THE END.